THERAPEUTICA SACRA;

Shewing briefly

The method of healing the diseases of the Conscience, concerning

REGENERATION:

Written first in Latine

BY

DAVID DICKSON,

Professor of DIVINITY in the Colledge of *Edinburgh*,

And thereafter Translated by him.

Matth. 9. 12.

They that be whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick.

EDINBURGH,

Printed by *Evan Tyler*, Printer to the King's most Excellent Majesty. 1664.

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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
AND
VERY NOBLE,
The COUNTESSE Dowager of
GLENCAIRN.

MADAM,

AFter the Author had written and publiſhed this Treatiſe in Latine, for the uſe of young Students in Theology; by the earneſt and frequent entreaty of friends, he was induced and perſwaded to tranſlate it into our vulgar Tongue, for the benefit of theſe who underſtood not the Latine; and for preventing the labour of others, who, more forward then skilfull, were about the doing of it, and had once ſo far proceeded, as to offer it to the Preſs, without acquainting him therewith.

When he had finiſhed the Tranſlation, his purpoſe was to have dedicated it to your Ladyſhip, and to have ſent it abroad into the world under your protection: but weakneſs and ſickneſs, the ordinary companions of age, and after them, death (whereby God Almighty and

Gracious, called him from his labours to enter into his Maſter's joy) ſeaſing upon him, before he could write an Epiſtle Dedicatory, it was his will, that your honourable Name ſhould be prefixed unto it. In purſuance whereof, it comes now, as an Orphan, to kiſs your noble Hands, fraughted with hopes of favour and ſhelter for the Parent's ſake, and of acceptance, as a teſtimony of the ſincerity of the reſpects he carried to your Ladyſhips vertues.

It hath the ſtronger plea for a tender reception, that it is the child of his age, being his laſt labour, and being brought forth in his ſeventy and ſecond year; and that it comes arrayed in a ſute of Country-cloath, which himſelf put upon it, being publiſhed according to the Copy written with his own hand.

That it may be, as it was deſigned by him, uſefull for the good of ſouls; and that God may comfort you under your preſent ſad affliction, and make up the loſs of your noble Husband, the late Lord high Chancellour of Scotland, *is the prayer of,*

MADAM,

Your Ladyſhips moſt humbly devoted Servant,

Edinburgh. 13. *June,* 1664.

Alexander Dickſon.

THERAPEUTICA SACRA,

Translated by the Author;

Shewing shortly,

The method of healing the diseases of the Conscience, concerning Regeneration.

CHAP. I.

Of Conscience in general.

SEing our purpose is to speak of the curing of sundry ordinary cases, or diseases concerning Regeneration, by a prudent application and use-making of divine Covenants, made about and with man, for his coming to eternal life; it is needfull to speak in the entry a little, first, of the nature of the Conscience, and use thereof in general; next, of the cases of the conscience in general; thirdly, what Regeneration is, and who is the man regenerat; fourthly, of divine Covenants, relating to everlasting happiness; and, fifthly, of the orderly and prudent application of these Covenants in general, that thereafter we may descend to speak of application thereof in particular Cases the more clearly. J 2 3 4 5

I. 2. As to the first, what conscience is, It hath pleased God, the soveraign Lord and Judge of all men, in the Creation, to put in mans soul a natural power or faculty, whereby he might not only understand the revealed will of God, (the only Lord of, and Law-giver to, the Conscience) not only concerning what he should believe and perform, but also might judge of his own faith and obedience, whether performed or not performed; yea, and might judge also of the faith and obedience of others, in so far as evidences may be had of their conformity unto, or dis-agreement from, the revealed rule of faith and maners. This power of the soul of man, whether it be considered only in its natural aptitude and fitness to judge, (though not as yet, or for the time, actually judging) or whether it be looked upon as it is putting forth it self in exercise, we call it by the name of *Conscience*.

3. The word *Conscience* is divers wayes taken; for sometime by it is meaned the natural power of the mind, to judge both of our own and others conformity to the rule: and in this larger acception we say, *Every man hath a Conscience*, that is, every man, whether male or female, whether old or young, whether sleeping or waking, hath a faculty, which may, and sometime shall, judge of their own and others behaviour towards God. Sometime it is taken for that natural power of the mind, putting forth it self actually in exercise, by judging of others; So doth the Apostle take it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. *I trust*, saith he, *we are made manifest in your consciences*. But here, in this Treatise, we take *Conscience* more strictly, as it examineth and judgeth of our selves; for, in this sense, it is most properly called *Conscience*, or joint-knowledge; partly, because it supposeth, that God and we know our obedience, or disobedience, to the rule prescribed to us by Him; partly, because Conscience imports, first, our knowledge of the rule; and, next, our knowledge of our behaviour in relation to the rule, and our comparing of these two together, and passing of sentence of our selves answerably.

4. Con-

4. Conſcience, as it doth reſpect our ſelves, is no other thing, in effect, then the underſtanding power of our ſouls examining how maters do ſtand betwixt God and us, comparing His will revealed, with our ſtate, condition and carriage, in thoughts, words or deeds, done or omitted, and paſſing judgment thereupon as the caſe requires: So that in the court of Conſcience, (which is Gods Depute in us, as it were) theſe five things are to be conſidered; 1. the duty of ſelf-examination; 2. the thing we are to examine; 3. the rule whereby we are to examine; 4. the proceſs of the Conſcience unto ſentence giving; and, 5. the execution of the ſentence, ſo far as the Conſcience may. 1.2.3 4.5

5. As to the firſt, the duty of examination of our ſelves and judging our ſelves, it is required of us, leſt we be judged of God and chaſtiſed with ſharp rods, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. 32. and hereunto we are exhorted, *Pſ.* 4.4. *Commune with your own hearts upon your beds, and be ſtill.* 1

6. As for the ſecond, the thing which we are to examine concerning our ſelves, it is one of three, or all the three, in their order; to wit, either our *eſtate*, whether we be in the ſtate of nature, under wrath, or not; or whether we be regenerat and in the ſtate of grace through faith in Jeſus Chriſt, or not. Of this ſpeaketh the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Examine your ſelves whether ye be in the faith.* Or it is our *conditon*, whether being in the ſtate of grace our preſent diſpoſition or inclination of heart and affections be ſuch, as becometh a man reconciled or not. To this point of examination, Chriſt doth call the Angel of the Church of *Epheſus*, Rev. 2. 5. *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen.* Or, the thing we are to examine is our deeds, words and thoughts actually done or omitted; the neglect of which examination is reproved, *Jerem.* 8. 6. and *Revel.* 2. 19, 20. 2 1) 2) 3)

7. The third thing to be looked unto in the court of Conſcience, is the rule whereby we are to examine our ſelves in all, or any, of the former reſpects, which is the 3

revealed will of God in holy Scripture; wherein is set down to us what we should believe, and what we should do, and what is the reward of the obedience of faith, and what is the punishment of disobedience. And here if the Conscience be not well informed, and the rule closly cleaved unto, the erring Conscience may swallow down the grossest idolatry, and cry up *Diana* for a great goddess, *Act.* 19. 28 and make the murtherers of the Saints conceive, that in killing them they do God good service, *Joh.* 16. 2.

4 8. The fourth thing is, the judicial process of the Conscience, for giving such a sentence of direction for what is to be done, or of absolution or condemnation, in the point examined and found done or not done: which process, if the Conscience be well informed, is after the maner of clear reasoning, by way of Syllogisme, wherein we lay down the rule given by the supreme Law-giver, in the *major* or first proposition. Then we do lay our selves to the rule in the *minor* or second assumed proposition; and from the comparison of our selves, with the rule, we give out sentence in the third room, which is called the Conclusion. As for example, If the Conscience be about to give direction for what is to be done, it reasoneth thus,

What God hath appointed to be the only rule of faith and maners, I must take heed to follow it as the rule.

But, *the holy Scripture, God hath appointed to be the only rule of faith and maners.*

Therefore, *I must take heed to follow the Scripture as the only rule.*

Or more shortly, the Lord hath commanded to repent and turn unto him. (offering reconciliation in Christ) therefore it is my duty so to do.

But in the process of the Conscience unto conviction or absolution, sometime moe, sometime fewer reasonings are used.

As for example, for conviction, the process goeth thus,

That

That which God hath commanded me, I should have done:
But, *to repent and turn to Him, He hath commanded me*;
Therefore, *I should have repented and turned to God.*

Again, *He that hath not obeyed the Lord, in repenting of his evil wayes and turning unto God, is under great guiltiness, and worthy of death, by the sentence of the Law*;
But, *such a one am I*, may every impenitent person say of himself:
And, therefore may conclude of himself, *I am under great guiltiness, and worthy of death, by the sentence of the Law.*

Likewayes, in the process of the Conscience, a humbled person well informed, may reason thus,
That way of reconciliation which God hath appointed a self-condemned sinner to follow, I am bound to follow;
But, *this way* (and no other) *hath God appointed, that the sinner, convinced of sin and of deserved wrath, should flee to Christ Jesus the Mediator, that by Him he may be justified, sanctified and saved.*:
Therefore *this way of reconciliation*, and no other, *I am bound to follow.*

Again, *Whosoever, by the grace of God, in the sense of sin and deserved wrath, is fled unto Christ for righteousness and eternal life and in Christs strength, is endeavouring to give new obedience to the will of God, is undoubtedly a true believer and child of God*;
But, *such a one am I*, may the humbled sinner, fled to Christ, say of himself:
Therefore, *I am, by the grace of God, undoubtedly a true believer and a child of God.*

And yet again he may go on, to strengthen his faith, and to comfort himself in the Lord, thus,
Whosoever in the sense of sin, poverty and weakness, hath fled to Christ the Redeemer, resolved never to part with Him, and hath consecrated himself, in the strength of Christ, to endeavour to give new obedience to the will of God, he is an heir with Isaac *of the promised blessings, and may hope to have them perfectly in possession at last*;

But *such an one am I*, may the humbled ſinner, tled to Chriſt, ſay of himſelf:

Therfore, *I am an heir of the promiſed bleſſings with* Iſaac, *and may hope to have them perfectly in poſſeſſion at laſt.*

Such a proceſs as this doth the Conſcience of the regenerat man follow, when he reneweth the acts of his repentance, and ſentenceth himſelf worthy of what the Law pronounceth againſt his ſin; and when he reneweth the acts of his faith in Chriſt, through whom alone he is fred from the deſerved curſe of the Law.

5 9. As to the fifth thing to be obſerved in the court of Conſcience, which is, the execution of the ſentence it hath pronounced; becauſe the Conſcience is ſet over the man by God, as Judge-depute: therefore it goeth about, in the name of God, by and by to execute, as it may, the ſentence juſtly pronounced by it; and according to the nature of the ſentence of condemnation or abſolution, pronounced by it, it ſtirreth up divers motions and affections in the heart; ſome of them ſad and ſorrowfull, ſome of them joyfull and comfortable. The ſad and bitter paſſions that follow upon the ſentence of conviction and condemnation, juſtly pronounced, are ſhame, grief, fear, anxiety, vexation and ſuch-like; whereby the guilty ſinner is either fretted, as with a worm, or fired and tormented. Of this we have an example in our firſt parent *Adam*, who, being convicted in his conſcience of ſin and deſerved wrath, did flee from the face of God, all amazed and affrighted, *Gen.* 3. 9. 10. *The Lord called unto* Adam, *and ſaid unto him, where art thou? And he ſaid, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, becauſe I was naked, and I hid my ſelf.*

But the Conſcience, after it is furniſhed by the Goſpel to abſolve the penitent believer fled to Chriſt, doth ſtir up more ſweet and comfortable motions in the heart, ſuch as are, peace, comfort, joy, gladneſs, exultation, confidence, and ſuch-like. An example whereof we ſee in *Paul*, 2 *Cor*, 1. 2. *Our rejoycing*, ſaith he, *is this*, the

the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.

So the Conscience, after it is wounded by the mans transgression, doth the part of a *Judge*, citing the man before its Tribunal; and the part of an *Officer*, presenting the man at the Bar; and the part of an *Accuser*, challenging the man for his transgression; and the part of the *Recorder*, producing the book of Statutes; and the part of sufficient witnesses, proving and convincing him of the deed done.

Again it doth the part of a *Judge*, pronouncing sentence and condemning the convicted transgressour; and the part of a *Sergeant* and *Marshal*, binding the condemned wretch; and the part of the *Prison* and *Stocks*, pinching and pressing the bound sinner; and the part of the *Burrio*, scourging and tormenting him.

But the Conscience, after examination, finding the man either innocent and free of the crime, or forgiven and reconciled to God by Christ, after repentance and faith, embracing the Redeemer, it doth the part of an honest *Friend*, carefully comforting the innocent or penitent; and the part of an *Advocat*, excusing and defending the man against all challenges; and the part of *Witnesses compurgatours*; and the part of the *Judge absolving*; and the part of the *Rewarder*. And so much concerning the nature and use of Conscience, as may suffice our purpose.

CHAP. II.

Of Cases of Conscience in general.

A Case of Conscience, taken in a large sense, comprehends every accident which any way affects or qualifieth the Conscience. And in this sense, the perswasion and certainty, which the Conscience may have, the soundness, health and strength of the Con- II

ſcience, may be called Caſes and good Caſes of the Conſcience.

So alſo, any effect which the Conſcience doth work on the ſoul, ſuch as are peace of conſcience, comfort and joy in the heart, may be called Caſes of the Conſcience alſo.

But the Caſes whereof we are to treat, are the ill Caſes of the Conſcience, whereby it is fallen from the ſoundneſs and ſtreightneſs it ſhould have, which we call by the name of wounds, diſeaſes, and ſickneſs of the Conſcience: whereunto, that we may deſcend to ſpeak more orderly, a twofold difference is to be obſerved.

2. Firſt, we muſt put difference between a healthy and a ſick Conſcience. A healthy Conſcience is that, which after examination of our wayes, according to the rule of Gods Word, doth juſtly abſolve us, and ſpeaketh peace to us toward God. Of ſuch a conſcience it is ſaid by *Solomon*, *A ſound heart is the life of the fleſh*, Prov. 14. 30. by the *heart* he meaneth the *conſcience*, which ordinarly in Scripture is called the *heart*. And he ſaith, the ſound *conſcience* is the life of the fleſh; becauſe the body is ſo much in better caſe, that the conſcience be at peace toward God. And this bleſſing is allowed upon every believer in Chriſt, in his orderly walking, 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. *God hath not given us the ſpirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a ſound mind.* A Conſcience in this diſpoſition needeth not medicine, but ſpiritual nouriſhment and exerciſe in all Chriſtian-duties.

A ſick Conſcience we call, that which either is ſenſeleſs of its own evils and dangers it is in, and ſitteth down ſecurely, and reſteth without a warrand; Or, which is juſtly wounded, and labours under the ſenſe of its pain; or, which is unquiet upon miſtakes and ignorance of making uſe of the true remedy: of ſuch a ſick Conſcience we are to ſpeak, if poſſible, by Gods bleſſing, a word in ſeaſon may be ſpoken, to waken a ſecure conſcience, or to refreſh the weary ſoul, that being recovered from its malady, it may be able to feed upon the bread

and

and water of life, and work the works of God in the ſtrength of Chriſt.

3. Secondly, we muſt put difference between a troubled Soul and a troubled Conſcience; for, the Soul is more largely taken then the Conſcience. The Soul comprehendeth all the powers and faculties of the man; but the Conſcience, as we ſpeak of it, is only one faculty of the mind, judging of the mans moral ill or well-being; and ſo all caſes of the *Conſcience* are caſes of the *Soul:* but, all the caſes of the *Soul* are not caſes of the *Conſcience.* For, the Soul may be troubled while the Conſcience is not troubled at all; yea, a man may have a commendable trouble in his ſoul, when he ſeeth God diſhonoured or His Church in hazard, whereby his conſcience is ſo far from being troubled, that ſuch a holy trouble ſtrengthens his conſcience in his addreſs to God, as is in many places of the *Pſalms* to be ſeen.

Again, a mans mind may be troubled by ſundry natural or civil motives; while the conſcience is allowably quiet, as in loſſes of things temporal, fears, pains or unexpected inconveniencies occurring; yea, there may be paſſions and perturbations of the mind in perſons that are not capable for the time of the exerciſe of Conſcience, as may be ſeen in young infants, and in the elder ſort, in fits of feaver, melancholy and phrenſie: and yet further, it is poſſible that paſſions, perturbations and troubles of ſoul, may be found without any diſeaſe of the Conſcience; becauſe our Lord Jeſus, in the dayes of his humiliation, was a man acquainted with ſorrows, but was not obnoxious to ſin or any ſelf-challenging; for, he knew no ſin in himſelf. He had trouble in his ſoul, but could not have trouble of conſcience, *Joh.* 12. 27. *Now is my ſoul troubled, and what ſhall I ſay? Father, ſave me from this hour; but for this cauſe came I unto this hour.* Of the caſes of the *Soul* we ſpeak not here, but of the ſinfull diſeaſes of the *Conſcience.*

4. There is alſo a third difference to be obſerved between common caſes of Conſcience, and theſe that ſpecially

cially concern Regeneration. Common cases comprehend all these questions and doubts, wherein the Conscience is seeking light and resolution about the rule of faith and maners, that it may better inform it self about the sense of Scripture, and about the application thereof in the point of direction in faith and practice. These common cases are of as large extent, as the bulk of Divinity, as large as the Doctrine held forth in Scripture concerning faith and maners: for, there is not any one article of faith or duty prescribed, as a point of piety or righteousnes, about which questions may not be moved and cases propounded, wherein the Conscience may seek satisfaction.

Of this hudge great tree, we take but only one branch to speak of, so far as maketh for our purpose concerning Regeneration.

CHAP. III.

Of Regeneration, what it is; and the regenerat man, who he is.

III. WE speak not here of the regeneration of elect infants, dying in their infancy, God hath His own way of dealing with them; but of the regeneration of those who are capable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word which we may thus describe,

Regeneration (being one in effect with effectual calling) *is the work of Gods invincible power and meer grace, wherein, by His Spirit, accompanying His Word, He quickeneth a redeemed person lying dead in his sins, and reneweth him in his mind, will and all the powers of his soul; convinceing him savingly of sin, righteousnes and judgment, and making him heartily to embrace Christ and Salvation, and to consecrat himself to the service of God in Christ, all the dayes of his life.*

2. The

2. The main thing we muſt take heed to in this work, is to give to God intirely the glory of His *Grace* and *Power* and *Wiſdom*, ſo that the glory of mans regeneration be neither given to man, nor man made ſharer of the glory with God, but God may have the whole glory of His *free grace*, becauſe out of His own good-will, not for any thing at all foreſeen in man, He lets forth his ſpeciall love on the redeemed in a time acceptable; And the glory of His *Almighty power*, becauſe by His omnipotent and invincible working He makes the man dead in ſins to live, opens his eyes to take up ſavingly the things of God, takes away the heart of ſtone, and makes him a new creature, to will and to do His holy will; And the glory of His *Wiſdom*, who dealeth ſo with His creature as He doth not deſtroy, but perfect the naturall power of the mans will, making the man regenerat, moſt freely, deliberatly and heartily to embrace Chriſt, and to conſecrat himſelf to Gods ſervice. The reaſon why we urge this, is, becauſe *Satan*, by corrupting the doctrine of regeneration, and perſwading men that they are able of themſelves by the common and the naturall ſtrength of their own free-will, without the ſpeciall and effectuall grace of God, both to convert themſelves and others alſo, doth foſter the native pride of men, hindreth them from emptying and humbling themſelves before God, keepeth them from ſelf-denyall, doth mar the regeneration of them that are deluded with this errour, and obſcureth what he can, the ſhyning of the glory of Gods grace, power and wiſdom in the converſion of men: for, whatſoever praiſe, proud men let go toward God for making mens converſion *poſſible*, yet they give the whole glory of *actuall* converſion to the man himſelf, which Chriſt aſcribeth to God only, and leaveth no more for man to glory in his ſpirituall regeneration, then he hath to glory in his own naturall generation, *Joh.* 3. 5. 6. 7. 8. And the ſame doth the Apoſtle teach, *Epheſ.* 2. 8. 9. 10. and, *Philip.* 2. 13. *It is God* (ſaith hee) *which worketh*

in

in you both to will and to do of His own good pleasure. And therefore it is the duty of all Christs disciples, but chiefly their duty who are consecrat to God, to preach up the glory of Gods free grace, omnipotent power and unsearchable wisdom, to live in the sense of their own emptinesse, and to depend upon the furnitour of grace for grace, out of Christs fulnesse; and zealously to oppose the proud errour of mans naturall ability for converting himself, as they love to see, and find the effectuall blessing of the Ministery of the Gospel, and themselves accepted for true disciples at the day of their meeting with Christ the Judge at His second coming.

3. For opening up of regeneration, these five propositions must be holden. The first is this, the naturall man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for, they are foolishnesse unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. 2. 14.

The second is this, it is the Spirit of God which convinceth man of sin, of true righteousnesse and of judgement, *Joh.* 16. 9. 10. 11.

The third is this, in regeneration, conversion and quickning of a sinner, God, by his invincible power, createth and infuseth a new life and principles thereof, *Psal.* 110. 3. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*, and, *Joh.* 5. 21. and 6. 63.

The fourth is this, the invincible grace of God, working regeneration and a mans conversion, doth not destroy the freedom of mans will, but makes it truely free, and perfects it. *Jer.* 31. 31. *I will make a Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, and will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, &c.*

The fifth is this, albeit a man, in the act of Gods quickning and converting of him be passive, and in a spirituall sense dead in sins and trespasses, yet, for exercising externall means, whereof God maketh use unto his conversion, for fitting him and preparing of him for a gracious change (such as are, hearing of the Word, reading

reading of it meditating on it, inquiring after the meaning of it, &c.) the naturall man hath a naturall power thereunto as to other externall actions, which sufficeth to take away excuse from them who have occasion of using the means and will not use them, *Matth.* 23. 37.

For clearing of the first proposition, we must remember, that the object of actuall regeneration, conversion and effectuall calling, is the man elected or redeemed by Christ, lying in the state of defection from God destitute of originall righteousnesse, at enimity with God, bently inclined to all evill, altogether unfit and impotent, yea even spiritually dead to every spirituall good, and specially to convert, regenerat or quicken himselfe: for albeit after the fall of *Adam* there are some sparks of common reason remaining, whereby he may confusedly know that which is called spirituall good, acceptable and pleasant unto God and fit to save his soul; yet the *understanding* of the unrenewed man judgeth of that good, and of the truth of the Evangell wherein that good is proponed, to be meer *foolishnesse*, and doth represent the spirituall object, and sets it before the *will*, as a thing uncertain or vain; and the *will* of the unrenewed man, after deliberation & comparison made of objects, some honest, some pleasant and some profitable in appearance, naturally is inclined to prefer and choose any seeming pleasant or profitable thing, whether the object be naturall or civill, rather then that which is truly honest and morally good. But if it fall out that a spirituall good be well and in fair colours, described unto the unrenewed man, yet he seeth it not, but under the notion of a naturall good, and as it is cloathed with the image of some naturall good, and profitable for preserving its standing in a naturall being and welfare therein. So did the false prophet *Balaam* look upon the felicity of the righteous in their death, when he did separat eternall life from faith and sanctification, and did rent asunder the means from the

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end appointed of God, saying, *Let me dye the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his*, Numb. 23. 10.

After this maner the woman of *Samaria* apprehended the gift and grace of the holy Ghost, and saving grace offered to her by Christ, *Lord* (saith she) *Give me of that water, that I may not thirst again, and may not come again to draw water*, Joh. 4. 15. So also did the misbeleeving Jews judge of the application of Christs incarnation and suffering for their spirituall feeding, Joh. 6. 33. 34. 35. for, *The naturall man cannot know the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned*, and the naturall man is destitute of the spirit of illumination, 1 Cor. 2. 14. And the wisdom of the flesh is enimity to God: for, it is not subject to the law of God, yea, it cannot be subject unto it, *Rom.* 8. 7. The power therefore of the naturall or unrenewed man is not fitted for the discerning, and loving of a spirituall good, because he is altogether naturall and not spirituall: For, a supernaturall object, requireth a supernaturall power of the understanding and will, to take it up, and rightly conceive of it: But of this supernaturall faculty, the unrenewed man is destitute, and in respect of spirituall discerning, he is dead, that he cannot discern spirituall things spiritually.

4. As for the second proposition anent a mans regeneration, the Lord, that He may break the carnall confidence of the person whom He is to convert, first, sheweth him his duty by the doctrine of the law and covenant of works, making him to see the same by the powerfull illumination of the holy Spirit, and so taketh away all pretext of ignorance. Secondly, He sheweth him his guiltinesse and deserved damnation wherein he is involved, and so taketh away all conceit and imagination of his innocency, Thirdly, He doth convince him of his utter inability to satisfie the law, or to deliver himself from the curse thereof, either by way of action and obedience, or by way of suffering and paying of the penalty of the violat law of God: And so overturn-

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eth all confidence in himself, or in his own works. Whence followeth the elect mans desperation to be delivered by himself, because he seeth himself a sinner, and that all hope of justification by his own deeds or sufferings, is cut off. Now, that this is the work of the holy Spirit, is plain, *Joh.* 16. 8. *When the comforter, the spirit of truth, shall come, He shall convince the world of sin, &c.* And in this condition sundry of Gods dear children, for a time are keeped under the bonds of the law, under the spirit of bondage and sad conviction.

5. As for the third proposition, the Lord after He hath laid the sin of His elect child, who is to be converted, to his charge by the doctrine of the law, first, openeth up a light unto him in the doctrine of the Gospel, and lets him see, that his absolution from sin and his salvation is possible, and may be had, by flying unto Christ the Redeemer. Secondly, the Lord drawing near hand the humbled self-condemned soul, deals with him by way of morall swasion, sweetly inviting him in the preaching of the Gospel, to receive the Redeemer Christ Jesus, the eternall Son of God manifested in the flesh, that by receiving of Him as He is offered in the Evangel, for remission of sin, renovation of life, and eternall salvation, he may close the Covenant of grace and reconciliation with God. Thirdly, because the fall of *Adam* hath bereft man of all spirituall and supernaturall power, till he be supernaturally quickned and converted by the omnipotent power of Gods grace: Therefore the Lord superaddeth unto morall swasion, effectuall operation, and formeth in the soul a spirituall faculty and ability for doing what is pleasant unto God, and tendeth to save himself according to the will of God. This infusion of a new life, sometime is called the forming of the new *creature*, sometime *regeneration*, sometime *rising* from the dead and *vivification*, or quickning of the man, sometime *saving* grace and the *life* of God, and the *seed* of God, having in it the principle of all saving graces and habits, which are brought forth afterward to acts and exercise.

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Mean time, true it is, that all men, becauſe of their inborn corruption, have an inclination and bent diſpoſition to reſiſt the holy Ghoſt; But when the Lord will actually convert the man, He overcometh and taketh away actuall reſiſtance, and doth ſo break the power of naturall rebellion, that it doth not for ever after *reign* in him: for, if God did not take away actuall reſiſtance of the man in his converſion, no converſion ſhould certainly follow, and God ſhould be diſappointed of His purpoſe to convert the man, even when He hath put forth His almighty power to work converſion; But God doth ſo wiſely and powerfully ſtir up this new infuſed life of grace, and ſetteth it ſo on work, that the *underſtanding* and judgement like a counſellour, and the *Will* like a commanding Emperour, and the *active* power of the new infuſed faculty as an officer, do all beſtir themſelves to bring forth ſupernaturall operations. Whence it cometh to paſſe, that the new creature beginneth to look kindly on Chriſt the Redeemer, and to deſire to be united unto Him, and doth ſtreateh forth it ſelf to embrace Him heartily, for obtaining in Him righteouſneſſe and ſalvation, as He is offered in the Goſpel: And ſo he caſts himſelf over on Chriſt with full purpoſe never to ſhed from Him, but by faith to draw out of Him grace for grace, till he be perfected. And here the man that was meerly paſſive, in his quickning and regeneration, beginneth preſently to be active in his converſion, and following converſation: for, God giveth to him to will and to do of His good pleaſure; And he having obtained by Gods effectuall operation to will and to do, doth formally will and do the good which is done.

6. As to the fourth propoſition, when the power of God is put forth, invincibly for the converting of a ſoul, that invincible working is ſo far from deſtroying the naturall liberty of the will, that it doth indeed preſerve it, and ſets it right on the right object, and doth perfect it: For, as when God openeth the eyes of a mans underſtanding,

ſtanding, that he doth behold the wonders of His law, when hee removeth the naturall blindneſſe of the mind, and maketh a man ſee that the Goſpel is the wiſdom and power of God unto ſalvation; which ſometime he counted to bee meer fooliſhneſſe, he doth no wayes deſtroy the mans judgement, or underſtanding, but doth correct, help, heal, and perfect it; So when the holy Spirit doth powerfully and effectually move and turn the *Will* of the man to embrace the ſweet and ſaving offers of Chriſts grace in the Goſpel, and maketh him deliberatly chooſe this bleſſed way of ſalvation, and to renounce all confidence in his own, or any others worth or works, He doth not deſtroy, but perfect the liberty of the *Will*, and raiſeth it up from death and its damnable inclination, and maketh it moſt joyfully and moſt freely to make choice of this pearl of price, and bleſſe it ſelf in its choice for ever. Therefore, let no man complain of wrong done to mans free-will, when God ſtops its way to hell, wiſely, powerfully, graciouſly and ſweetly moveth it to chooſe the way of life; But rather let men beware to take the glory of actuall converſion of men, from God, and either give it wholly to their idoll of *free-will*, or make it ſharer of the glory of regeneration with God, which glory God will not give to another, but reſerve wholly to Himſelf: for, all men, in the point and moment of regeneration, are like unto *Lazarus* in the grave, to whom God, by commanding him to ariſe, gave life and power to ariſe out of the grave where he lay dead and rotting.

7. As to the fifth propoſition, We muſt diſtinguiſh the work of regeneration from the preparation and diſpoſition of the man to be regenerat, whereby he is made more capable of regeneration to be wrought in him: for, the materiall diſpoſition of him, fitting him for regeneration, is neither a part nor a degree of regeneration; for, albeit the Lord be not bound to theſe preparatory diſpoſitions, yet He will have man bound to make uſe of theſe externall means which may prepare him;

because, by the use of externall means (such as are, hearing of the word, Catechising and conference, &c.) a man may be brought more near unto regeneration, as Christ doth teach us by His speech to that Pharisee, who was instructed in the law and answered discreetly unto Christ; *Thou art not far* (saith He) *from the kingdom of God*, Mark. 12. 24. This preparatory disposition, in order unto regeneration, is like unto the drying of timber to make it sooner take fire, when it is casten into it. For, dryness in the timber, is neither a part nor a degree of kindling or inflammation of it; But only a preparation of the timber to receive inflammation when the fire shall be set to it, or it put in the fire, possibly, a long time after. In these preparatory exercises then, no man will deny, that the naturall man unrenewed, hath a naturall power to go and hear a Sermon preached, to read the Scripture, to be informed by Catechising, and conference of Religion and regeneration, whereof God when He pleaseth may make use in regeneration of the man. Wherefore, whosoever in the preaching of the Gospel, are charged and commanded to repent, to believe in Christ, or turn unto God, they are commanded also to use all these externall means whereby they may be informed of the duty required, and of the means leading thereunto; in the exercise of which externall means, they may meet with sundry common operations and effects of Gods Spirit, before they be regenerat or converted, whereof the use may be found not only in, but also after, conversion; And if any man shall refuse, slight or neglect to follow these preparatory exercises, which may prepare him for conversion, he is inexcusable before God and man, and guilty of rejecting of the offer of reconciliation, yea guilty of resisting of the holy Ghost, of which sin and guiltynesse the holy martyr *Stephen* chargeth the misbelieving Jews, *Acts* 7. 51.

8. As for the regenerat man, he it is who in the acknowledgement of his sinfulnesse and deserved misery, and of his utter inability to help himself, doth cast away all

all confidence in his own parts, and possible righteousneſſe of his own works, and fleeth to Christ offered in the Goſpel, that in Christ alone he may have true wiſdom, righteousneſſe, ſanctification, and redemption; and doth with full purpoſe of heart conſecrat himſelf, and endeavour, in the ſtrength of Christ, to ſerve God acceptably all the dayes of his life

For the ground of this deſcription, we have the words of the Apoſtle, *Philip.* 3. 3. Where putting a difference between the true people of God, and the counterfit, he ſaith. *We are the circumciſion who worſhip God in the ſpirit, and rejoyce in Jeſus Chriſt, and have no confidence in the fleſh.* In which deſcription of the regenerat man, the Apoſtle firſt points forth unto us three ſpeciall operations of the Spirit of regeneration, then three duties of the man regenerat.

The firſt operation of the Spirit of God, the only circumciſer of the heart, is the humbling of the man in the ſenſe of his ſin by the doctrine of the law, and cutting off all his confidence in his own worth, wit, free-will and ſtrength to help himſelf. So that the man hath no confidence in the fleſh.

The ſecond operation, is the infuſion of ſaving faith, making the man humbled to cloſe with Chriſt in the Covenant of reconciliation, and to reſt upon Him as the only and ſufficient remedy of ſin and miſery, ſo that Chriſt becometh to him the ground of rejoycing and gloriation.

The third operation, is the upſtirring and enabling of the believer in Chriſt, to endeavour new obedience, and to worſhip God in the ſpirit.

As for the three duties of the man regenerat. The firſt is, to follow the leading of the Spirit in the poynt of more and more humbling of himſelf before God in the ſenſe of his own inſufficiency, and ſhewing of all leaning on his own parts, gifts, works, or ſufferings, or any thing elſe beſide Chriſt; *He muſt have no confidence in the fleſh.*

The second duty, is to grow in the estimation of Christs righteousnesse and fulnesse of all graces to be letten forth to the believer imploying Him by faith, and comforting himself in Christ against all difficulties, troubles and temptations; *He must rejoyce in Jesus Christ.*

The third duty, is to endeavour communion-keeping with God in the course of new obedience in all cases, worshiping and serving God in sincerity of heart; he must be a worshiper of God.

As to the last thing holden forth in the Apostles words, which is the undoubted mark and evidence of the man regenerat and circumcised in heart, it standeth in the constant endeavour to grow in these three duties joyntly, so as each of them may advance another: for, many failings and short-comings will be found in our new obedience and worshiping of God in the spirit; but, let these failings be made use of to extinguish and abolish all confidence in our own parts and righteousnesse, that our dayly failings may humble us and cut us off from all confidence in the flesh.

But let not these failings so discourage us, as to hinder us to put confidence in Christ; but by the contrair, the lesse ground of confidence we find in our selves, let us raise so much higher the estimation of remission of sin and imputation of Christs righteousnesse, and stir up our selves by faith to draw more strength and ability out of Christ for enabling us to walk more holily and righteously before God; and having fled to Christ and comforted our selves in him, let us not turn his grace into wantonnesse; but the more we believe the grace of Jesus Christ, let us strive, in his strength, so much the more to glorifie God in new obedience: And in the circle of these three duties, let us wind our selves up stairs toward heaven: for, God hath promised, that such *as wait on the Lord, shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint,* Isaiah 40. 31.

In the conjunction of these three duties, the evidence of

of regeneration is found. If there be not a sincere endeavour after all these three duties, the evidence of regeneration is by so much darkned, and short for probation: for, it is not sufficient to prove a man regenerat, that he is driven from all confidence in his own righteousnesse, and filled with the sense of sin and deserved wrath, because a man that hath no more then that, may perish in this miserable condition, as we see in *Judas* the traitour, whose conscience was burdened with the sense of sin, but did not seek mercy and pardon. Neither is it sufficient to boast of acquaintance with Christ, and professe great respect to him, because many do cry, Lord, Lord, who neither renounce their confidence in their own righteousnesse, nor worship God in spirit; for, of such Christ saith, *Matth.* 7. 21. *Not every one that saith to Him, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of God.* Neither is it sufficient to pretend the worshiping of God in spirit: for, all they who think to be justified by their own works, do esteem their manner of serving of God, true and spirituall service and worship, as may be seen in the proud Pharisee glorying before God in his own righteousnesse, and acknowledging that God was the giver unto him of the holinesse and righteousnesse which he had, *Luke*, 18. 11. *I thank Thee, O God,* saith he, *that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican*: for, of this man Christ saith, he returned to his house unjustified, that is, a man lying still in sin unreconciled.

Neither is it sufficient to prove a man regenerat, to confess sin and by-gone unrighteousnesse, and to promise and begin to amend his wayes and future conversation; for, so much may a Pharisee attain. And there are many that professe themselves Christians, who think to be justified by the merits of their own and other saints doings and sufferings, and do disdainfully scoff and mock at the doctrine of the imputed righteousnesse of Christ; how many are they also, who think their by-gone sins may be washen away, and be recompenced by

their purpose to amend their life in time to come? How many are they, who, being willingly ignorant of the righteousnesse of God, which is of faith in Jesus Christ, go about to establish their own righteousnesse as the Jews did? *Rom.* 10. 3.

And how few are they who follow the example of the Apostle, who carefully served God in spirit and truth, but did not lean to his own righteousnesse, but sought more and more to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousnesse, which behoved to be made up of his imperfect obedience of the law, but that righteousnesse which is by faith in Jesus Christ? *Philip.* 3. 9.

But that man, who daily in the sense of his sinfulnes and poverty fleeth unto Jesus Christ, that he may be justified by His righteousnesse, and endeavoureth by faith in Him to bring forth the fruits of new obedience, and doth not put confidence in these his works when he hath done them, but rejoyceth in Jesus Christ the fountain of holinesse and blessednesse; That man (I say) undoubtedly is regenerat, and a new creature, for so doth the Apostle describe him, *Philip.* 3. 3.

CHAP. IV.

Of divine Covenants about the eternall salvation of men; and in speciall, of the Covenant of redemption, shewing that there is such a Covenant, and what are the articles thereof.

IV.

BEcause the healing of the sicknesses of the conscience cometh by a right application of divine Covenants about our salvation: therefore it is necessary, that some measure of the knowledge thereof be opened up.

1. A divine covenant we call, a contract or paction, wherein God is at least the one party contracter. Of this sort of covenants about the eternall salvation of men (which sort chiefly belong to our purpose) there are three. The first is, the covenant of redemption, past between

between God, and Christ God appointed Mediatour, before the world was, in the council of the Trinity. The second is, the covenant of works, made between God and men, in Adam in his integrity, indued with all naturall perfections, enabling him to keep it, so long as it pleased him to stand to the condition. The third is, the covenant of grace and reconciliation through Christ, made between God and believers (with their children) in Christ.

2. As to the covenant of redemption; for clearing the mater, we must distinguish the sundry acceptions of the word *redemption*: for, 1. Sometime it is taken for the contract and agreement of selling and buying-back to eternall salvation, of lost man, looked upon as in the state of sin and misery. In which sense, we are said to be bought by Christ, both souls and bodies, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. 20. *Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods.* And this may be called *redemption by paction* and agreed bargain. 2. Sometime *redemption* is taken for the paying of the price agreed upon. In which sense, Christ is said to have redeemed us, by suffering of the punishment due to us, and ransoming of us, *Gal.* 3. 13. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law*, being made a curse for us. 3. Sometime *redemption* is taken for the begun application of the benefits purchased in the covenant by the price payed, *Ephes.* 1. 7. *In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace.* 4. Sometime *redemption* is taken for the perfect and full possession of all the benefits agreed upon between the Father and Christ His Son the Mediatour. In which sense, we are said to be *sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, untill the redemption of the purchased possession*, Ephes. 1. 14. and Ephes. 4. 30. it is said, *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*; which is the day of Judgement, when Christ shall put us in full possession of all the blessednesse

ſedneſſe which He purchaſed by bargain and payment for us.

In this place we take redemption in the firſt ſenſe, for the covenant paſt between the Father and Chriſt His Son, deſigned Mediatour, about our redemption.

3. When we name the Father as the one party and His Son Chriſt as the other party in this covenant, we do not ſeclude the Son and holy Spirit from being the party offended; but do look upon the Father, Son and Spirit, one God in three Perſons, as offended by mans ſin; and yet all three contented to take ſatisfaction to divine juſtice for mans ſin in the Perſon of the Son, as deſigned Mediatour, to be incarnat. Whereby the Son is both the party offended as God, one eſſentially with the Father and holy Spirit; and the party contracter alſo, as God deſigned Mediatour perſonally for redeeming man, who with conſent of the Father and holy Spirit, from all eternity willed and purpoſed in the fulneſſe of time, to aſſume the humane nature in perſonall union with Himſelf, and for the elects ſake to become man, and to take the cauſe of the elect in hand, to bring them back to the friendſhip of God, and full enjoyment of felicity for evermore.

When therefore we make the Father the one party, and the Son deſigned mediatour the other party, ſpeaking with the Scripture, for the more eaſie uptaking of the Covenant, let us look to one God in three Perſons, having abſolute right and ſoveraign power according to His own pleaſure to diſpoſe of men, looked upon as lying before God (to Whom all things are preſent) in ſin and death drawn on by mans own deſerving, and yet for the glory of His grace reſolving to ſave the elect, ſo as His juſtice ſhall be ſatisfied for them, in and by the ſecond Perſon of the Trinity, the co-eternall and coeſſentiall Son of the Father.

4. This covenant of redemption then may be thus deſcribed. *It is a bargain, agreed upon between the Father and the Son deſigned Mediatour, concerning the elect (lying*

with

with the reſt of mankind in the ſtate of ſin and death, procured by their own merit) wiſely and powerfully to be converted, ſanctified and ſaved, for the Son of Gods ſatisfaction and obedience (in our nature to be aſſumed by Him) to be given in due time to the Father, even unto the death of the croſſe.

In this bargain or agreement, the Scripture importeth clearly, a ſelling and a buying of the elect, *Acts* 20. 28. *Feed the Church of God, which He hath purchaſed by His own blood,* 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. *ye are bought with a price*, and 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. The ſeller of the elect, is God; the buyer, is *God incarnat*; the *perſons* bought, are the Church of the elect; the *price*, is the blood of God, to wit, the blood of Chriſt, who is God and man in one perſon.

This covenant of *redemption*, is in effect one with the eternall decree of redemption, wherein the ſalvation of the elect, and the way how it ſhall be brought about is fixed, in the purpoſe of God, who worketh all things according to the counſell of His own Will, as the Apoſtle ſets it down, *Epheſ.* 1. unto the 15 verſe.

And the decree of redemption is in effect a covenant, one God in three perſons agreeing in the decree, that the ſecond Perſon, God the Son, ſhould be incarnat, and give obedience and ſatisfaction to divine juſtice for the elect: unto which piece of ſervice the Son willingly ſubmitting Himſelf, the decree becometh a reall covenant indeed.

But for further ſatisfaction, that there is ſuch a covenant between the Father and the Son, as we have ſaid, for redeeming of the elect, Scripture giveth us evidence ſix wayes.

The firſt way is by expreſſions, which import & preſuppone a formall covenant between the parties, buying and ſelling; the ſecond way is, by ſtyles and titles given to Chriſt the Redeemer; the third is, by expreſſions relating to an eternall decree for execution and performance of the covenant of redemption; the fourth is, by repreſentation of this covenant in the Leviticall types; the fifth is, by Chriſt the Redeemer now incarnat, His ratification

ratification of the covenant; and the sixth way is, by holding forth to us the heads and articles agreed upon, wherein the covenant consists.

The first proof.

AS to the expressions, importing a formall covenant, first, *Ephes.* 1.7. it is called a *redemption*, or a buying of the elect out of sin and misery by blood, shewing that no remission of sin could be granted by Justice, without sheding of *blood*, and Christ undertook to pay the price, and hath payed it.

Again, the *inheritance* which the elect have promised unto them, is called a *purchase*, importing, that the disponer of the inheritance to the elect, must have a sufficient price for it, and that the Redeemer hath accepted the condition and laid down the price craved for it, *Ephes.* 1. 14. and so bought back lost heaven and forfeited blessednesse to so many sinners, who otherwayes for sin, might justly have been excluded and debarred therefrom for ever.

A third expression is holden forth, *Acts* 20. 28. wherein God *disponer* and God *Redeemer*, are agreed, that the elect shal go free for God the Redeemer's obedience unto the death, who hath now bought them with His blood.

A fourth expression is in plain terms set down by *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. *Ye are bought with a price:* God the disponer selleth, and God the Redeemer buyeth the elect to be His conquest, both body and spirit. And *Peter* more particularly expresseth the price of redemption agreed upon, to be not gold or silver, but the blood of the Mediatour Christ, the innocent Lamb of God, slain in typicall prefigurations from the beginning of the World, and slain in reall performance in the fulnesse of time, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. 19. 20. 21.

A fifth expression is, that of our Lord Jesus in the institution of the Sacrament of His Supper, Matth. 26. 28. *This is my blood of the new Testament, which is shed for many, for remission of sins.* Here an agreement between the

the Redeemer and God disponer, that these *many* which are the elect, shall have remission of sins for the Redeemers ransom of blood payed for them. The purchase of this ransom of blood, He maketh over in the Covenant of grace and reconciliation to believers in Him, and sealeth the bargain with them by the Sacrament of His Supper.

The second proof.

THe second evidence of this Covenant of Redemption past between God and God the Son Mediatour designed, is from such titles and styles as are given to Christ in relation to the procureing of a Covenant of grace and reconciliation between God and us. First, He is called a *Mediatour* of the Covenant of reconciliation, interceeding for procureing of it, and that not by a simple intreaty, but by giving Himself over to the Father (calling for satisfaction to Justice, that reconciliation might go on) for paying a compensatory price, sufficient to satisfie Justice for the elect, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. 6. There is *one God* and *one Mediatour between God and man* (to wit, God incarnat) *the man Christ Jesus who gave Himself a ransom for all* (to wit, elect children) *to be testified in due time.*

Another title is given to Him by Job, *Chap.* 19. 24. Where He is called a *Redeemer*, a near kinsman, who before His incarnation had oblieged Himself to take on humane nature, and to pay the price of Redemption (represented by slain sacrifices) for the elect His kinsmen.

A third title is held out, in that He is called a *Surety* of a better Covenant, *Heb.* 7. 22. Whereby is imported, that God would not passe a Covenant of grace and reconciliation to men, except He had a good *Surety* who would answer for the debt of the party reconciled, and would undertake to make the *reconciled* stand to his Covenant. And Christ undertook the Suretyship, and so hath procured and established this Covenant of grace, much

much better then the Covenant of works, and better then the old Covenant of grace with *Israel*, as they made use of it. This necessarily imports a Covenant between Him and the Fathers Justice, to whom He becometh surety for us: for, what is *suretiship*, but a voluntary transferring of anothers debt upon the Surety, oblieging to pay the debt for which he ingageth as Surety?

A fourth title given to Christ, is, that He is a *reconciliation* by way of permutation; the *atonement*, *Rom.* 5. 11. *We have by Christ received the atonement*, that is, that which hath pacified the Fathers Justice and reconciled Him to us, is made over in a gift unto us; for, by Christs procurement we have God made ours, & Christ pacifying God, put, as it were, in our bosome: for, God having sold us to Christ, by taking Christs satisfaction for ours, He hath come over to us as reconciled, and given us Christ the Reconciler and the atonement, to be ours. Here is an agreement made between God and Christ, and the condition of the agreement between the parties for our behoof, clearly imported and presupposed.

The fifth title given to Christ, is this, He is called the *propitiation*, 1 *Joh.* 2. 2. Whereby God is pacified, not only for the believing *Jews*, but also for the whole elect World, which should believe in Him. And if He be the *pacifying propitiation*, then God hath satisfaction in all that His Justice craved from Christ for the elect; and, *Rom.* 3. 25. He is called a *propitiatory sacrifice*, wherewith God is so well pleased, that He makes offer of Him to us, and sets Him forth to us for pacifying our Conscience through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousnesse for remission of sins, without breach of Justice; wherein, what price God required and was payed by Christ, is insinuat and presupposed; for, satisfaction could not be, except the price agreed upon, had been promised and accepted before in Covenanting.

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The third proof.

THe third evidence, proving that there was a Covenant of Redemption past before the beginning of the World, is, because the eternall decree of God was fixed about the way of Redemption to be fulfilled in time: for, *Known unto God were all His works from the beginning*, *Acts* 15. 18. And whatsoever God doth in time, He doth it according to the eternall counsell of His own Will, *Ephes.* 1. 9. Now, Christ the eternall Son of God, being made man, laid down His life for His sheep. *The Son of man goeth, as it was determined, but wo unto that man by whom He is betrayed*, *Luke*, 22. 22. And whatsoever Christ suffered, was by the determined counsell of God, *Acts*, 2. 23. And God the Son, before He was incarnat, declares the decree of the Kingdom promised unto Him by the Father, and of the victories which He should have over all His enemies, and of the felicity and multitude of the subjects of His Kingdom, that should believe in Him, *Psal.* 2. 7. *I will declare the decree*, saith He; presupposing therefore the decree of God, of sending His eternall Son into the World, to become a man and to suffer, and thereafter to reign for ever, we must also necessarily presuppose the consent of the Son, making paction with the Father and the Spirit, fixing the decree and agreement about the whole way of Redemption, to be brought about in time: for, the same Person, Christ Jesus, who dwelt among men in the dayes of His humiliation, *Joh.* 1. 14. *Was with the Father* from eternity: and as *by Him all things were made, which were made*, *Joh.* 1. 2. 3. So without Him nothing was decreed which was decreed, *Prov.* 8. 22. to 32. which also is manifest in the Apostles words, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *He saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the World began.*

For, as before the beginning of the World, the elect were given to the Son designed Mediatour to be incarnat, and the price agreed upon; so also grace to be given in time

time to the redeemed by compact, was given from eternity unto Christ, their designed Advocat. Also, *Ephes.* 1. 3. 4 5. we were elected in Christ, unto holinesse and salvation and unto all spirituall blessings, and were predestinat to the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ: And 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. 19. 20. *We are redeemed, not with gold or silver, but by the precious blood of Christ, who was predestinat before the beginning of the world.* Whereby it is manifest, that the Covenant between the Father and the Son, was transacted concerning the incarnation of the Son, and His sufferings, death and resurrection, and all other things belonging to the salvation of the elect.

The fourth proof.

THe fourth evidence of the passing a Covenant between the Father and the Son, is holden forth in the typicall priesthood of *Levi*, by the altar and sacrifices, and the rest of the leviticall ceremonies which were prescribed by God: for, as these things were testimonies, preachings, declarations and evidences of a Covenant, past of old between God the disponer, and the Son the Redeemer, about the way of justifying and saving such as believed in the Messiah by an expiatory sacrifice, to be offered in the fulnesse of time, for the redeemed; So also they were prefigurations, predictions, propheſies and pledges of the Redeemers paying of the promised price of Redemption. And this agreed-upon-price (because of the perfections of the parties contracters, the Father and the Son) was holden and esteemed as good as payed, from the beginning of the World; and the agreed-upon-benefits purchased thereby, to wit, grace and glory, were effectually bestowed on the faithfull before Christs incarnation, as the *Psalmist* testifies, *Psal.* 84. 11. *The Lord*, saith he, *is a sun and a shield, the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly*; and, *Psal.* 73. 24. *Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsell, and afterward receive me into glory*; and that because the promised price of Redemption was of no lesse worth, to give righteousnesse and

and life eternall to believers in the Messiah to come, then the price now payed is now of worth to give for it, righteousnesse and life eternall to these that believe in the Messiah now come, Jesus Christ incarnat. And this donation of saving graces, as remission of sin, and carying on to life eternall, was sealed unto believers in the Covenant of reconciliation, by the appointed Sacraments of circumcision and the paschal lamb.

The fifth proof.

THe fifth evidence of a Covenant past between the Father and the Son Mediatour to be incarnat, is this, Christ now incarnat, doth ratifie all these things which the Father and Himself not yet incarnat, and the holy Spirit had spoken in the old Testament about the salvation of the elect, and the price of their redemption, and of the conditions to be performed on either hand; And, as it were of new, doth repeat and renew the covenant which before was past between the Father and Himself before He was incarnat: for, *Luke*, 2. 49. speaking to *Joseph* and His mother when He was about twelve years old, He saith, *Wist ye not, that I must be about My Fathers businesse?* and, *Matth.* 3. 13. He presents Himself pledge and surety for sinners before the Father, to be baptized for them with the baptism of affliction, and to fulfill all righteousnesse, as was agreed upon before, *vers.* 15. whereupon the Father doth receive and admit the surety and His undertaking for payment, *vers.* 17. and, *Lo, a voice from heaven, saying, this is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; and *Joh.* 5. 39. He standeth to all things which were testified of Him in the Scriptures; *Search the Scriptures: for in them ye think to have eternall life, and they are they that testifie of Me.* And *vers.* 36. He professeth, that all that He doth, is with the Fathers consent and concurrence, and that He came into the World, that He might finish what the Father had sent Him to do and suffer, which He calls His work that He was about. And more specially He shews the agreement past between the Father and Him before He came into the world

world concerning his incarnation, and the discharge of his Mediatory office, and his power to give eternall life to those that believe in him: for, the Father sent him to be incarnat, *vers.* 37. and that he with the Father, might give *eternall life to whomsoever he will, and might quicken the dead*, *vers.* 21. and that he might exercise judgement, authority was given to him as the Son of man, *vers.* 27. Yea, he sheweth, that it was agreed upon between the Father and him about all the doctrine which he should teach, *John* 8. 26. *I speak to the World these things* which I have heard of him; and he sheweth that they were agreed about the price of redemption of the elect, and about his resurrection from the dead, and that his death did fully satisfie the Father, *Joh.* 10. 15. *As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep*; and *vers.* 17. therefore doth the Father love Me, because I *lay down My life that I might take it again*; and, *vers.* 18. *this commandment have I received of the Father.* And, *Luke*, 24. 25. he propones in short the sum of the covenant past between the Father and himself, speaking to the two disciples going to *Emaus*; *O fools and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter in his own glory?* But most briefly he sheweth the whole mater so oft as he calleth the Father *his God*, and that in respect of the *covenant* past between God and him to be incarnat, and now incarnat indeed.

The sixth proof.

THe sixth evidence of the Covenant of Redemption, past between the Father and the Son, standeth in the heads and articles of the Covenant wherein they were agreed.

Now there are as many articles of the Covenant, as there are injunctions, commands and conditions required on the one hand, and promises to fulfill all on the other hand; as many predictions as there are of Christs sufferings, and promises made to the Church through and for Him. Of these many, we shall touch only

only at four, whereby the faith of believers in Him may be confirmed about their Redemption by Him, and whereby the erroneous doctrine of them who evacuat the Covenant of redemption of the elect, may be refuted: wherein they teach, that Christ, by His obedience yielded unto the Father, even to the death of the crosse, did purchase no more but a possibility of salvation, and no more grace for the elect then for the reprobat, as if He had not purchased a certainty of salvation to be given to any, but had suspended all the fruit of His suffering upon the frail, mutable, inconstant and corrupt *free-will* of men; so that no man can by their doctrine have more certainty of their own salvation, then they have of the certainty and stability of their own fickle mind and will: and so no more certainty of their own salvation, then of their own perdition. The order we shall keep in speaking of the articles of the Covenant of Redemption, shall be this.

The first article, shall be of the persons redeemed.

The second article, shall be of the price of Redemption to be payed by Christ in the fulnesse of time.

The third article, shall be about the gifts and benefits purchased for, and to be given unto, the persons Redeemed.

The fourth article of this Covenant of redemption, past between the Father and the Son, shall be of the means and wayes whereby the gifts and benefits purchased, may be wisely, orderly and effectually applyed to the Redeemed.

In ranking of these articles, we do not presuppose a priority of one of them before another in order of nature or time; But we choose to speak of them in order of doctrine, for our more easie understanding of the mater.

For, the Covenant of Redemption past between the Father and the Son, is by way of an eternall decree of the Trinity, comprehending all and whatsoever belongeth to Redemption. In the decerning of which

decree, there is not a firſt nor a laſt, but a joint purpoſe of God to bring about and accompliſh all the heads and articles of the Covenant, each in their own due time, order and way appointed.

The firſt article of the Covenant of Redemption concerneth the perſons redeemed.

THe redeemed in Scripture, are pointed forth under ſundry expreſſions; ſometime they are called the *predeſtinat*; ſometime the *elect*; ſometime theſe *whom God foreknew*; ſometime they who are *called according to His purpoſe*; ſometime *they that were given* to Chriſt of the Father; ſometime *Chriſts ſheep*; ſometime the *children of God*, &c. But whatſoever name they have, the perſons are the ſame, according to that of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8. 29. 30. *Whom He did foreknow, them He did predeſtinat to be conform to the image of His Son---- Moreover whom He did predeſtinat, them He alſo called; and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified; and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.* The number and the names of the perſons here ſpoken of, are the ſame; and they are called the *predeſtinat*, in regard that God hath appointed them to a certain end, to wit, eternall life, to be brought thereunto effectually by certain means for the glory of Gods grace. They are called *elect*, *verſ.* 33. in regard God in the purpoſe of his good pleaſure, hath ſevered them from among the reſt of men, lying with them in the ſtate of perdition by their own procurement, and hath deſigned them to be partakers of eternall ſalvation. They are called *foreknown*, and written in the book of life, in regard God hath comprehended them in his ſpeciall love, no leſſe diſtinctly and unchangeably, then if he had their names written in a catalogue, or book. And they are called *given* unto Chriſt, in regard the redeeming of them, and bringing them to life is committed to Chriſt. But by whatſoever name they are deſigned, the perſons redeemed are ſtill the ſame.

2. But whereas the elect, given to Chriſt, are called

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the redeemed, it presupposeth, that they were considered and looked upon as now fallen by their own fault, and lying by their own merit in sin and misery, enemies to God, and altogether unable to help themselves. For, this much doth the notion of *Redemption*, or buying back again import: and that it is so, is clear, because the mercy of God, the grace of God, the good-will of God, is put in Scripture for the only motive and impulsive cause of Redemption, *Ephes.* 1. 7. 8. 9. *In whom we have Redemption through his blood, even the forgivenesse of sins according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he had purposed in himself.*

3. The Scripture sheweth us that there is an innumerable multitude of redeemed persons, and a sort of *universality* of them, extended unto all nations and ages and states of men; so that this hudge multitude for whose *redemption* Christs blood was shed, *Matth.* 26. 29. is justly called by the name of a world, an *elect world*, *Joh.* 3. 16. to be called out of that reprobat world, for which Christ refuseth to intercead, *Joh.* 17. 9. the truth of this mater, the *redeemed* do acknowledge in their worshiping Christ their Mediatour, *Rev.* 5. 9. *and they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for, thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kinred and tongue and people and nation.* These are the *all men* whom God will have saved and doth save, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. these are the *all men* of whom the Apostle speaks, 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. God is patient toward us (to wit his elect) not willing that any of *us* should perish, but that *we all* should come to repentance: And this the Apostle giveth for a reason of the Lords deferring his coming, till *all the elect* should be brought in, of whom many were not yet converted in the Apostles time and many were not yet born, and if Christ should not delay his coming, till they were born and brought in to reconciliation

with God, the number of the elect should be cut short.

4. In no place of Scripture is it said, that *all* and *every man* are elect, or every man is given to Christ, or every man is *predestinat unto life*; in no place of Scripture is it said, that Christ hath made paction with the Father *for all and every man without exception*; But by the contrary, it is sure from Scripture, that Christ hath merited and procured salvation *for all them* for whom he entered himself Surety. *Their sins* only were laid on Christ, and in him condemned, satisfied for, and expiat, *Isa.* 53. for *these*, and in *their* place he offered himself to satisfie Justice, for *them* he prayed, *them* only he justifieth and glorifieth: for, the sentence of the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. standeth firm; *in Christ all are dead* (to the law) *for whom* and in whose room Christ did die. And therefore for *these his people* the law is satisfied: from *these* the curse is taken away, *to them* heaven and all things necessary to salvation are purchased, and shall *infallibly* in due time, yea *invincibly* be applied.

Christ hath not sanctified, consecrat, and perfected all and every one, *Heb.* 10. 14. only for his sheep predestinat, he laid down his life, *John* 10. 15. 16. 26. he did not buy with his blood all and every one, but his *Church* called out, and severed from the world, *Acts*, 20. 28. he saveth not *all* and *every man* from their sins, but his *own people* only, to wit, whom he hath bought with his blood to be his own, *Matth.* 1. 21. whom he hath *purchased* to be his own peculiar, whom he doth purifie, and kindle with a fervent desire to bring forth good works, *Tit.* 2. 14.

Such as Christ hath redeemed, he loveth them infinitly, and counted them dearer to him then his life. But many shall be found to whom Christ shall say *I never knew you*, to wit, with approbation and affection, *Matth.* 7. 23.

They for whom Christ hath died, shall sometime glory against all condemnation; but so shall not every man be able to glory, *Rom.* 8. 34. 35.

Christ

Christ never purposed to lay down his life for those, whom going to die he refuseth to pray for; only for those who are given to him out of the world will he pray and die, and rise, and will raise them to eternall life, *Joh.* 17. 9.

So far is it from Gods purpose and Christs to redeem *all* and *every man*, that he hath not decreed to give every nation so much as the externall necessary means for conversion and salvation, *Psal.* 147. 19. 20. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgements unto Israel; He hath not dealt so with any nation*; and *as for his judgements they have not known them.*

And for this wise and holy course of hiding the mystery of salvation from many, even wise men in the world, Christ Jesus glorifieth and thanketh the Father, *Matth.* 11. 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes, even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

The second article.

AS to the second article of the Covenant of Redemption concerning the price of Redemption, and the fitting of the Redeemer for accomplishing the work of Redemption, God would not have silver, or gold, or any corruptible thing, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. He refuseth all ransome that can come from a meer man, *Psal.* 49. 8. But He would have His own co-eternall and only begotten Son to become a man, to take on the yoke of the law, and to do all His will, that He alone might redeem the elect, who by nature are under the curse of the law. He would have Him the second Adam to be obedient even to the death of the crosse, that by His obedience many might be justified, *Rom.* 5. 19.

This is clearly confirmed by the Apostle, Heb. 10. 5. 6. 7. 10. commenting upon the 7. and 8. verses of *Psal.* 40. *In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure, then said Christ coming into the world, Lo, I come (in the volumne of the book it is written of Me) to do*

thy will O God-- by the which will we are ſanctified, by the offering up of the blood of Jeſus once for all.

2. By Chriſts obedience we underſtand not only that which ſome call his *active obedience*, nor that only which ſome call his *paſſive obedience*: for, his active and paſſive obedience, are but two notions of one thing; for, his incarnation, ſubjection to the law, and the whole courſe of his life was a continued courſe of ſuffering, and in all his ſuffering he was a free and voluntary agent, fulfilling all which he had undertaken unto the Father, for making out the promiſed price of Redemption, and accompliſhing what the Father had given him command to do. His obedience, even to the death of the croſſe, did begin in his emptying himſelf to take on our nature, and the ſhape of a ſervant, and did run on till his reſurrection and aſcenſion. As for theſe his ſufferings in the end of his life, which he ſuffered both in ſoul and body, they were the compleating of his formerly begun and running obedience, but were not his only obedience for us, or his only ſuffering for us, for he had done and ſuffered much from his incarnation before his laſt paſſion and death, but the higheſt degree of his obedience, whereby he bought deliverance unto us from ſin and miſery, and whereby he bought unto us, immortality and eternall bleſſedneſſe in heaven, was his death on the croſſe compleating our ranſom.

3. Whereas ſome have ſaid, that one drop of His blood was ſufficient to redeem moe worlds then one, if there were any moe, it is but an inconſiderat ſpeech, and deſtitute of Scriptural authority; for when Chriſt had ſuffered all things before the time of His death, it behoved Him to be crucified alſo, *Luke* 24. 26. but it behoved Him not to ſuffer more then juſtice required for a ranſom, but only as much as was agreed upon, and no leſs could ſatisfie. Now this commandment He received of the Father, that He ſhould lay down His life for His ſheep, *Joh.* 10. 18. For, the wiſdom of God thought good, to teſtifie His own holineſs and hatred

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of sin, and to testifie His love to the elect world, and riches of His grace toward them to whom He would be merciſull, by inflicting no leſs puniſhment of sin on the Mediator His own dear Son (taking upon Himſelf full ſatisfaction to juſtice for all the ſins of all the Elect given unto Him to redeem) then the death both of His body and ſoul for a ſeaſon.

And indeed it was ſuteable to His holy and ſoveraign Majeſty, that for the ranſom of ſo many thouſands and millions of damnable ſinners, and ſaving of them from everlaſting torment of body and ſoul, no leſs price ſhould be payed by the Son of God, made man and ſurety for them, then His ſufferings both in His body and ſoul for a ſeaſon, as much as ſhould be equivalent to the due deſerved puniſhment of them whom he ſhould redeem; and it became the juſtice of the infinite Majeſty offended, to be reconciled with ſo many rebels, and to beſtow upon them heaven and eternal bleſſedneſs, for no leſs price then the ſufferings of the eternal Son made man, whoſe humiliation and voluntary obedience, even to the death of the croſs, was of infinite worth and value; and therefore he yieldeth himſelf to the ſufferings agreed upon in the covenant of Redemption, both in body and ſoul.

Of the ſufferings of Chriſt in His ſoul.

OUr Lords ſufferings in His body did not fully ſatisfie divine juſtice; 1. becauſe as God put a ſanction on the law and covenant of Works, made with us all in *Adam*, that he and his ſhould be lyable to death, both of body and ſoul, (which Covenant being broken by ſin, all ſinners became obnoxious to the death both of body and ſoul) So the redeemed behoved to be delivered from the death of both, by the Redeemers *taſting* of death in both kinds, as much as ſhould be ſufficient for their redemption. 2. As ſin infected the whole man, ſoul and body, and the curſe following on ſin, left no part nor power of the mans ſoul free; So juſtice

required, that the Redeemer, coming in the room of the persons redeemed, should feel the force of the curse, both in body and soul.

Ob. But how can the soul die, seing it is, by the Ordinance of God in creation, made immortal?

Ans. The death of the soul is not, in all things, like to the death of the body; for, albeit the spiritual substance of the soul be made immortal and not to be extinguished, yet it is subject to its own sort of death, which consists in the separation of it from communion with God, in such and such degrees, as justly may be called the death of the soul, from which sort of death, the immortality of the soul, not only doth not deliver, but also it doth augment it and perpetuat it, till this death be removed.

Obj. But, seing the humane soul of our Lord could never be separated from the permanent holiness wherewith it was endued in the first infusion of it in the body, and could never be separated from the indissolvable personal union with the second person of the God-head assuming it, how could His soul be subject to any degrees of death?

Ans. Albeit the con-natural holiness of the soul of Christ could not be removed, nor the personal union of it be dissolved, no not when the soul was separated from the body, yet it was subject, by Christs own consent, to be emptied of strength-natural, to be deprived for a time of the clearness of vision of its own blessedness, and of the quiet possession of the formerly felt peace, and of the fruition of joy for a time, and so suffer an eclipse of light and consolation, otherwise shining from His God-head; and so in this sort of spiritual death might undergo some degrees of spiritual death.

The degrees of the suffering of Christs holy soul.

AMong the degrees of the death suffered by Christ in His soul, we may number, first, that habitual heavines of spirit which haunted him all the dayes of His life, as was foretold by *Isa.* 53. 3. *He was a man of sorrows*

ſorrows, and acquainted with grief. We hear He weeped, but never that he laughed, and but very ſeldom that he rejoiced.

2. He ſuffered in ſpeciall, ſorrow and grief in the obſervation of the ingratitude of them, for whom he came to lay down his life, *We hid as it were our faces from him; he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not, Iſa.* 53. 3.

3. The hardneſſe of mens hearts, and the malice of his own covenanted people, and the daily contumelies and deſpightfull uſage he found from day to day, increaſed his daily grief. as by rivolets the flood is raiſed in the river; *he was deſpiſed and rejected of men, Iſa.* 53. 3.

4. He was tempted in all things like unto us, and albeit in them all never tainted with ſin, *Heb.* 4. 15. yet with what a vexation of his moſt holy ſoul, we may eaſily gather by comparing the holineſſe of our Lord with the holineſſe of his ſervants, to whom nothing is more bitter then the firie darts of the devil, and his ſuggeſtions and ſollicitations to ſin: eſpecially, if we conſider the variety of temptations, the hainouſneſſe of the ſins, whereunto that impudent and unclean ſpirit boldly ſollicited his holineſſe, *Matth.* 4. and withall, the importunity and pertinacy of the devil, who never ceaſed, partly by himſelf, partly by thoſe that were his ſlaves, and partly by the corruption which he found in Chriſts diſciples, to purſue, preſſe, and vex the God of glory all the time he lived on earth.

5. The guilt of all the ſins, crimes, and vile deeds of the elect, committed from the beginning of the world, was imputed unto him, by accepting of which imputation, albeit he polluted not his Conſcience, yet he burdened his ſoul, binding himſelf to bear their deſerved puniſhment.

Now when we ſee that the vileſt ſinners, as liars, thieves, adulterers, cannot patiently hear themſelves called liars, or thieves, nor bear the ſhame of the vileneſſe, whereof they are really guilty, with what ſuffering of ſoul? with what clouding of the glory of his

holineſſe

holineſſe, think we that our Lord took upon his ſhoulders ſuch a dunghill of all vileneſſe, then which, nothing could more be unbeſeeming his holy Majeſty?

6. Unto all the former degrees of ſuffering of his ſoul, the perplexity of his thoughts fell on him, with the admiration and aſtoniſhment of ſoul, when the full cup of wrath was preſented unto him, in ſuch a terrible way, as made all the powers of his ſenſe and reaſon for a time to be at a ſtand. Which ſuffering of his ſoul, while the Evangeliſt is about to expreſſe, he ſaith he began to be *ſore amazed*, and alſo to be *very heavy*; and to expreſſe himſelf in theſe words, *My Soul is exceeding ſorrowfull unto death*, *Mark*, 14. 33. 34.

Obj. But did not this aſtoniſhing amazement of Chriſts ſoul ſpeak ſome imperfection of the humane nature?

Anſ. It did no wayes argue any imperfection or inlake of ſanctity in him, but only a ſinleſſe, and kindly infirmity in regard of naturall ſtrength, in the dayes of his fleſh; for, the mind of a man, by any ſuddain and vehement commotion ariſing from a terrible object, may without ſinning be ſo taken up, that the ſwift progreſſe of his mind in diſcourſe may for a while be ſtopped, and the act of reaſoning ſuſpended a while: all the cogitations of the mind fleeing together to conſult, and not being able to extricat themſelves in an inſtant, may ſtand amazed, and ſit down a while, like Jobs friends aſtoniſhed. Now our Lord, taking on our nature and our common ſinleſſe infirmities, became like unto us in all things except ſin. *Daniels* infirmity at the ſight of an Angel, was not ſin, *Dan.* 10.

Obj. But doth not this aſtoniſhing admiration, ſuddainly lighting upon Chriſts ſoul, prove that ſomething unforeſeen of him did befall him?

Anſ. Not at all; for, he knew all things that ſhould befall him, and told his diſciples thereof, and was at a point and reſolved in every thing, which was to come before it came. But this aſtoniſhing amazement did only

only shew forth the naturall difference between things *preconceived* in the mind, and these same things *presented* to sense: for, there is in the mind a different impression of the preconceived heat of a burning iron, before it do touch the skin, from that powerfull impression which a hot iron thrust into the flesh doth put upon the sense. In regard of which naturall difference between *foresight* and *feeling*, between *resolution* and *experience*, this astonishment befell our Lord, and in this regard, Christ is said to learn experimentall *obedience by these things which he suffered*, Heb. 5. 8.

7. Another degree of the suffering of our Lords soul, is the interruption, for a time, of the sensible uptaking and feeling of that quiet and peaceable injoyment of the felicity of the humane nature, given (for the point of right) unto it in its personall union with his God-head, in so far, that in the midst of many disciples, Greeks and Jews looking on him, the vehemency of his trouble did not suffer him to hide his perturbation; for, (*Joh.* 12. 27.) our Lord cryed out, *Now is My Soul troubled, and what shall I say?* and, *Mark.* 14. 34. made him declare his exceeding heavinesse; *My Soul is exceeding sorrowfull unto death.* In which words he insinuats, that to his sense, death was at hand; yea, that in no small measure, it had seased on him, and wrapped him up in the sorrows of death, for the time, as in a net of which he knew he could not be holden still.

Obj. But did not this hudge heap of miseries take away from the humane nature, the felicity of its union personally with his God-head?

Anſ. It did indeed hide it for a time, and hinder the sensible feeling of it for a time, as it was necessary, in his deep suffering; but it did not take it away, nor yet eclipse it altogether: for, as a corporall inheritance hath a threefold connexion with the person owner thereof; so a spirituall inheritance hath a threefold connexion with the believers soul. The first is, of lawfull *title* and *right*; the next is, of *possession* of the inheritance according

according to the lawfull right; the third is, an *actuall fruition* and preſent feeling of the uſe of the inheritance. The fruition and felt benefite and uſe, may be marred or ſuſpended, & the poſſeſſion ſtand: and the poſſeſſion may be interrupted and ſuſpended, and the lawfull right remain firm. Chriſt had not only an undoubted right to this felicity ſtanding unto him, by the perſonall union, but alſo a faſt poſſeſſion of it, in as far as the perſonall union was indiſſolvable. But the actuall felt fruition in his humane ſenſe and uptaking, was ſo long interrupted as the humane nature was diverted from this contemplation for its preſent exerciſe, and turned to look toward the ſad ſpectacle of imminent and incumbent wrath: eſpecially when, and how long it was, as it were, bound to the feeling of the preſent ſtroke which did fill the ſoul with ſadneſſe and grief, anxiety and vexation, without ſin.

8. Neither did the vindictive juſtice of God, purſueing our ſins in our Surety, ſtay here, but in the garden went on to ſhew unto Chriſt the cup of wrath, and alſo to hold it to his head, and to preſſe him to drink it; yea, the very dregs of the agreed-upon curſe of the law, was poured into his patient and ſubmiſſive mouth, as it were, and boſome, and the m^r inward part of ſoul and body, which as a vehement flame, above all humane apprehenſion, ſo filled both ſoul and body, that out of all his veines it drew and drove forth a bloody ſweat (the like whereof was never heard) as when a pot of oyl, boyling up and running over by a fire ſet under it, hath yet further the flame increaſed by the thruſting of a firie maſſe of hot iron into it.

Hence came ſuch a waſting and eating up of all his humane ſtrength, and emptying of his naturall abilities, ſuch a down-throwing of his mind, ſuch a fainting and ſwounding of his joy, and ſo heavy a weight of ſorrow on him, that not only he deſired that ſmall comfort of his weak diſciples watching with him a little, and miſſed of it, but alſo ſtood in need of an Angel to comfort him, *Luke*, 22. 43.

It is without ground, that ſome of the learned have denied the cauſe of this agony to be the drinking of the cup of wrath holden forth to him by the Father, ſaying, that the ſight of it only and of the perill he ſaw we were into, was the cauſe of this heavy exerciſe: for, the cup was not only ſhowen unto him, and the hudge wrath due to our ſin ſet before him that he ſhould ſee it, and tremble at the apprehenſion of the danger we were in, but it was poured into him, and not only on him, that he for the ſins of his redeemed ſhould ſuffer it ſenſibly, and as it were drink it, that the bitterneſſe thereof might affect all the powers of ſoul and body: for, the Scripture teſtifies, that not only upon the ſight and apprehenſion of this wrath and curſe coming on him, the holy humane nature did holily abhor it, but alſo that he ſubmitted to receive it, upon the conſideration of the divine decree and agreement made, upon the price to be payed by him, and that upon the feeling of this wrath this agony in his ſoul, and *bloody* ſweat of his body, was brought on.

Obj. But, how could the pouring forth of the Fathers wrath upon his innocent and dear Son conſiſt with his Fatherly love to him?

Anſ. Even as the innocency and holineſs of Chriſt could well conſiſt with his taking upon him the puniſhment of our ſins; for, even the wrath of a juſt man, inflicting capitall puniſhment on a condemned perſon, put caſe his own child, can well conſiſt with fatherly affection toward the child ſuffering puniſhment; therefore it is not to be doubted, but theſe two can well conſiſt in God, in whom affections do not war one with another, nor fight with reaſon, as it falleth forth among men; for, the affections aſcribed unto God, are *effects* rather of his holy will toward us, then properly called *affections* in him; and theſe effects of Gods will about us, do alwayes tend to our good and bleſſedneſſe at laſt, however diverſe one from another in themſelves.

9. Among the degrees of the ſufferings of Chriſts ſoul,

ſoul, we may number not only the perturbation of his mind and thoughts, but alſo the perturbation of his affections, and eſpecially his fear; for, his humane nature was like unto ours in all things except ſin, and was indeed feared when it ſaw and felt the wrath of God, leaſt it ſhould have been ſwallowed up by it, and of this fear the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 5. 7.) beareth witneſſe, ſaying, *Who in the dayes of his fleſh, when he had offered up prayers and ſupplications, and ſtrong cryes and tears, unto him that was able to ſave him from death, and was heard in that he feared.*

Now, albeit this ſeemeth the ſaddeſt paſſage of all his ſufferings, that he was feared for being ſwallowed up, yet this his fear is not to be wondered at, nor is it inconſiſtent with his holineſſe; for when Chriſt aſſumed our nature (as hath been ſaid) he aſſumed alſo all the common and ſinleſs infirmities, paſſions, and perturbations of our nature: Now it is kindly that the creature, at the ſight of an angry God ſhould tremble; for, we read, that the rocks and mountains have trembled before God, when he did let forth his terrour; and it is naturall to man, at the ſight of a terrible object, at the ſight of a perill and evill coming upon him, but much more already come upon him (eſpecially if the evill and perill be above all his naturall ſtrength) to tremble and fear the worſt; and this becometh holy nature very well to fear preſent death, off-cutting, perdition and ſwallowing up in the danger, when God appeared angry and was haſting to be avenged on ſinners in the perſon of their *Surety*, what could the humane ſoul of Chriſt gather from this terrible ſight, but that which ſenſe and reaſon did teach? In the mean time there was no place here for his doubting of the iſſue and his eſcapeing from being ſwallowed up; for, naturall fear of the manly nature, ariſing from the infirmity of the creature, differs very far from the fear ariſing from the infirmity of faith in Gods faithfulneſſe and power; and naturall fear of the worſt, can very well ſtand with the ſtrength of faith to overcome the naturall fear: for, as

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the ſenſitive appetite may abhor a bitter cup of medicine, and cauſe all the body tremble for fear to take it, while in the mean time, the man by reaſon is reſolved to drink that bitter cup of medicine, becauſe he confidently hopeth to help his health thereby; ſo naturall fear in Chriſt to taſte of the cup of wrath, could very well conſiſt with ſtrong faith and aſſurance to be delivered therefrom: for, it is very ſutable that faith ſhould as far overcome the naturall apprehenſion of ſenſe and reaſon naturall, as reaſon doth overcome ſenſe in drinking a loathſom and bitter cup of medicine.

And to clear this yet further, that extream fear to be ſwallowed up of wrath, could well conſiſt in Chriſt with ſtrong faith to overcome and bear out that terrible wrath, Let it be conſidered, that as it was needfull Chriſt ſhould be ſubject to the infirmity of naturall ſtrength, that he might ſuffer death; ſo it was needfull, that he ſhould have ſtrong faith to inable him to bear out, in a holy way, that which he behoved to ſuffer: for, if on the one hand, Chriſt had not been weakned, and emptied of all humane ſtrength in his fleſh, he could not have been humbled enough for us, he could not have ſuffered ſo much, as Juſtice did exact for ſatisfaction for us; and on the other hand, if he had not ſtood firm in faith and love toward Gods glory and our ſalvation, he could not have ſatisfied Juſtice, nor been ſtill the innocent and ſpotleſſe lamb of God, nor have perfected the expiatory ſacrifice for us.

Obj. But was he not tempted to doubt by Satan?

Anſ. We grant that he was indeed tempted by Satan to doubt, yea we ſhall not ſtand to grant that he was tempted to deſperation; But we altogether deny, that he was tainted with ſin by temptation in the leaſt degree: for, the Scripture ſaith, he was tempted in all things like unto us, but yet without ſin in him or yielding in any ſort to any temptation. And ſeing by the Evangeliſt, *Matth.* 4. we underſtand, that he was tempted in the wilderneſſe by the devil unto the moſt horrible

horrible ſins that Satan could deviſe, and yet was not ſtained or polluted in the leaſt degree, with the leaſt meaſure of yielding to the ſinfull temptations; we need not ſtand to grant, that he might be tempted, or that he was tempted unto doubting and deſperation; for, this was among the moſt notable and prime temptations, whereby Satan, in his impudent boldneſſe, ſollicited the Son of God, very God and man in one perſon, even to doubt of that what Satan knew he was; *If thou be the Son of God*, ſaith he. It is true indeed, that we who are ſinners by nature and corrupted in all the powers of our ſoul, cannot be tempted, toſſed, and troubled, but therein our ſinfull nature in ſome meaſure may appear, and be polluted: But the mater was not ſo with our holy Lord, the God of glory, who was ſeparat from ſinners; for our impure nature is like to water in a pudle, which being ſtirred, doth preſently become muddy and foul; but the holy humane nature of Chriſt, was altogether pure, like unto clear and pure fountain water in a glaſſe, which howſoever it be troubled and toſſed, remaineth moſt pure and free of all muddineſſe.

Obj. But at leaſt, was there not a conflict in our Lord between his faith, and the temptation to doubting?

Anſ. We grant not only a conflict of Chriſts humane naturall ſtrength, with the burden of affliction, but alſo a conflict and wreſtling of his faith againſt the temptation to doubting; for, wreſtling doth not alwayes argue the infirmity of the wreſtler, for the Angel who is called God, *Hoſ.* 12. wreſtles with *Jacob*, and in God was no infirmity. Again, wreſtling doth not argue alwayes infirmity, but doth only evidence the wreſtlers power and the importunat obſtinacy of an adverſary, who being repulſed and caſt down, doth not at firſt leave the field, but riſeth up again, inſiſts and preſſeth on ſo long as it pleaſeth the moſt powerfull party to ſuffer the adverſary to make oppoſition.

Obj. But you muſt grant, that in the conflict of Chriſts humane naturall ſtrength, with the affliction

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and burden of the punishment laid upon him by the Father, he was overcome, and succumbed and died.

Ans. Yes indeed: but we must put a difference between the conflict of naturall strength with the burden of affliction, and the conflict between faith and a temptation unto sin; in the conflict of holy humane nature in Christ with the punishment of our sins laid on Him, it was not a sin to have his naturall strength overpowered, and to lye down under the burden and to lay down his life and die; but it was a main part of His obedience, it was the performance of His promise and undertaking, to yield himself to Justice and to die for us, that we might be delivered from death eternall. But in the wrestling of His faith with the temptation unto doubting, it had been a sin to have yielded in the least degree, and that which could not consist with the perfect holinesse of the Mediatour, Surety for sinners.

Obj. But, did not the perplexity of His thoughts and the anxiety of His mind, diminish something of the vigour and constancy of his faith?

Ans. It did diminish nothing of the vigour and constancy of His faith; for there is a great difference between the troubling of the thoughts, and the hesitation or weakening of faith, as there is also a great difference between the perturbations of the mind and the perturbation of the conscience. For, as the mind may be troubled, when in the consideration of some difficulty it cannot at first perceive an outgate, mean-time the conscience remaining sound and quiet; so may the work of the mind's discoursing, be interrupted and at a stay for a time, faith (mean time) remaining untouched, wholly sound and quiet. For example, upon the sudden receiving of a wound, or upon an unexpected report of some great losse, such as befell *Job*, the wheels of the reasoning faculty may be at a stand for a time, and the conscience in the mean time be quiet; yea, and faith in the mean time, remain strong, as we see in *Job's* first exercise.

Now if this may be found in an holy imperfect man in any measure, why shall we not consider rightly of the exercise of the holy one of Israel suffering in His humane nature the punishment of our sin?

Let us consider but one of the passages of our Lords exercise, *Joh.* 12. 27. 28. *Now* (saith He) *My Soul is troubled:* wherein behold the perplexity of His mind, smitten with the horrour of the curse due to us, coming upon Him; then cometh forth, *what shall I say?* wherein, behold! reason standing mute and altogether silent, only He lets forth the confession of His perplexity: presently after this, He subjoyneth *Father, save Me from this hour*; wherein behold! Holy nature, trembling and shrinking to fall into the wrath of the Father, and according to the principles of holy nature, testifying the simple abhorrency of His soul from such an evill as is the *wrath* of God His Father, which had it not been for love to save our souls, He could not have yielded his humane nature to endure, or bear it: therefore He, considering that we were but lost for ever, if He should not suffer wrath for us, He repeats the sum of the Covenant of Redemption agreed upon, *But for this cause came I unto this hour.* And last of all, shuts up His speech and exercise in the triumphing voice of victorious and untainted faith, *Father, glorifie thy Name*; and here He resteth: wherewith the Father is so well pleased, as that from heaven He speaketh to the hearing of the multitude standing by, *I have both glorified it, and will glorifie it again.*

10. Among the deepest degrees of the suffering of Christ in His soul, we reckon that desertion whereof Christ on the crosse giveth an account, crying out, *My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?* By which speech He doth not mean, that then the personall union of the natures was in him dissolved, nor yet that God had withdrawn His sustaining strength and help from the humane nature, nor that the love of the Father was taken off him, nor that any point of the perfection of

holinesse

holineſſe was taken from him; but his true intent is, to ſhew, that God for a time had taken away ſenſible conſolation, and felt joy from His humane Soul, that ſo juſtice might in His ſufferings be the more fully ſatisfied: And this is the *forſakeing* of Him here given to us to underſtand. In which deſertion Chriſt is not to be looked upon ſimply as He is in His own perſon, the Son of the Father, in whom He is alwayes well pleaſed, but as He ſtandeth in the room of ſinners, *Surety* and *Cautioner*, paying their debt: In which reſpect He behoved to be dealt with as ſtanding in our name, *guilty* and paying the debt of being forſaken of God, which we were bound to ſuffer fully and for ever, if He had not interpoſed for us.

II. The laſt degree of Chriſts ſufferings (wherein He may be ſaid to have *deſcended into hell* ſo far as Scripture in the old Teſtament or the hyſtory of Chriſts paſſion in the new, will ſuffer us to expound that expreſſion) is that curſe wherein the full wrath of God, and the dregs of that horrible cup was poured forth upon His holy humane nature, while heaven and earth and hell, ſeemed to conſpire to take vengeance on Him, and fully to puniſh our ſins in the perſon of Him our Surety by that curſed death of the croſſe, which was the evidence foretold of the malediction of God lying on Him, in ſo far as was neceſſary to compleet the puniſhment of loſſe and feeling both in ſoul and body. And therefore not without ground have Orthodox divines taken in Chriſts ſuffering in His ſoul, and the detaining of His body in the grave (put in as the cloſe and laſt part of Chriſts ſufferings) as the true meaning of that expreſſion *He deſcended into hell*: not only becauſe theſe pains which Chriſt ſuffered both in body and ſoul, were due to us in full meaſure; but alſo becauſe that which Chriſt ſuffered in the point of torment and vexation, was, in ſome reſpect, of the ſame kind with the torment of the damned: for, in the puniſhment of the damned, we muſt neceſſarily diſtinguiſh theſe three things, 1. the

perverse disposition of the mind of the damned in their sufferings; 2. the duration and perpetuity of their punishment; and, 3. the punishment it self, tormenting soul and body. The first two are not of the essence of punishment, albeit by accident they are turned into a punishment, for the wickednesse, vilenesse and unworthinesse of the damned, who neither will nor can submit themselves to the punishment (and put the case they should submit, are utterly unable to make satisfaction for ever) do make them in a desperat, dolefull condition for ever, though obstinat sinners do not apprehend nor believe this, but go on in treasuring up wrath against themselves, pleasing themselves in their own dreams, to their own endlesse perdition. Of these three, the first two could have no place in Christ: Not the first, because He willingly offered Himself a sacrifice for our sins; and upon agreement, payed the ransom fully: Not the second, because He could no longer be holden in the sorrows of death then He had satisfied Justice, and finished what was imposed on Him; and His infinit excellency made His short suffering to be of infinit worth, and equivalent to our everlasting suffering.

The third then remaineth, which is the reall and sensible tormenting of soul and body in being made a curse for us, and to feel it so in His reall experience. And what need we question hellish pain, where pain and torment, and the curse with felt wrath from God falleth on, and lyeth still, till Justice be satisfied? Concerning which, it is as certain, that Christ was seased upon by the dolours of death, as it is certain in Scripture, that He could not be holden of the sorrows of death, *Acts*. 2. 24.

Quest. But what interest had Christs God-head in His humane sufferings, to make them both so short and so precious and satisfactory to Justice for so many sins of so many sinners, especially when we consider that God cannot suffer?

Ans.

Anſ. Albeit this paſſion of the humane nature, could not ſo far reach the God-head of Chriſt, that it ſhould in a *phyſicall* ſenſe ſuffer (which indeed is impoſſible) yet theſe ſufferings did ſo affect the perſon, that it may truly be ſaid, that God ſuffered, and by His blood bought His people to Himſelf, *Acts*, 20. 28. for, albeit the proper and formall ſubject of phyſicall ſuffering be only the humane nature; yet, the principall ſubject of ſufferings, both in a phyſicall and morall ſenſe, is Chriſts perſon, God and man, from the dignity whereof, the worth and excellency of all ſort of ſufferings, the merit and the ſatisfactory ſufficiency of the price, did flow.

And let it be conſidered alſo, that albeit Chriſt, as God, in His God-head could not ſuffer in a phyſicall ſenſe; yet, in a morall ſenſe He might ſuffer, and did ſuffer: for, in as much as He, being in the form of God, and without robbery equall to God, did demit His perſon to aſſume humane nature, and empty Himſelf ſo far as to hide His glory and take on the ſhape of a ſervant, and expoſe Himſelf willingly to all the contradiction of ſinners which He was to meet with, and to all railings, revilings, contempt, deſpiſings and calumnies, ſhall it ſeem nothing, and not enter in the count of our Lords payment for our debt?

Obj. But, how could ſo low a downthrowing of the Son of man, or of the humane nature aſſumed by Chriſt, conſiſt with the Majeſty of the perſon of the Son of God?

Anſ. We muſt diſtinguiſh in Chriſt theſe things, which are proper to either of the two natures, from theſe things which are aſcribed to His perſon, in reſpect of either of the natures or both the natures; for, infirmity, phyſicall ſuffering, or mortality, are proper to the humane nature. The glory of power and grace and mercy, and ſuperexcellent Majeſty and ſuch like, are proper to the Deity; but the ſufferings of the humane nature, are ſo far from diminiſhing the glory of the divine nature, that they do manifeſt the ſame and make it

appear more clearly: for, by how much the humane nature was weakned, depressed, and despised, for our sake, by so much the love of Christ, God and man in one person, toward man, and His mercy and power and grace to man, do shine in the eyes of those that judiciously look upon Him.

Obj. But seing Christs satisfaction for sinners, doth not stand in any one part of His doings and sufferings, but in the whole and intire precious pearl, and compleet price of His whole obedience from His incarnation even to the death of His crosse, how cometh it to passe, that in Scripture the whole expiation of our sins, is ascribed so oft to His passion, and particularly to His blood?

Ans. This cometh to passe, 1. Because the certainty and verity of His assumed humane nature, and the certainty of His reall suffering, and the fulfilling of all the leviticall sacrifices, did most evidently appear unto sense in the effusion of His blood. 2. Because the expression of His sufferings, both in soul and body, appeared in the effusion of His blood: for, in the garden, while His body was not as yet touched, or hurt by man, from the meer pains of His soul, drops of blood fell down out of all His body to the earth. 3. Because His blood-shedding and death, was the last act of compleeting the payment of the ransom to the Father for us, which payment began in His humble incarnation and went on through all His life, and was compleeted in His blood-shed and death, whereof our Lord gave intimation on the crosse, when He cryed as triumphantly victorious, *it is finished.*

The use of this article of the covenant of Redemption.

WE have at some length spoken of the price of Redemption, and of Christs defraying the debt by His passion. 1. That hereby the merit of our sins, may the more clearly be seen. 2. That the sublimity and excellency of divine Majesty, offended by sin, may appear,

pear. 3. That we may behold the severity of Gods justice, till He have satisfaction and reparation in some sort ofthe injuries done to Him. 4. That the admirable largeneſſe of Gods mercy may be acknowledged and wondered at.

For in the price of Redemption payed, as in a mirror we may ſee, how greatly the Lord hateth ſin,; how great His love is to the world in ſending his Son Chriſt amongſt us; how heavy the wrath of God ſhall lye upon them that flee not to Chriſts ſatisfaction for their delivery; how great the dignity and excellency of the Lord our Redeemer is, for whoſe cauſe reconciliation is granted to all that take hold of the offer of grace through him; how great the obligation of believers is to love God, and ſerve him; and how greatly the glory of all the attributes of God, doth ſhine in the work of Redemption.

2. By this doctrine,it appeareth how vain and wicked the devices of ſuperſtitious men are, who, for pacifying of Gods wrath, have appointed pennances, and pilgrimages, and ſelf-ſcourgings, and ſoul-maſſes,and purgatory, and ſuch like other abominations, whereof the word of God hath not ſpoken, but forbidden all the inventions of men, as unworthy conceits, to bring about mens ſalvation: which inventions tend only to derogat from the dignity of the price of Chriſts ranſom, and to cry down the fulneſſe and perfection of the price payed by our bleſſed Redeemer Jeſus Chriſt, and to ſet up other Saviours in his room.

3. Hence alſo it is manifeſt, how fit a high Prieſt is appointed over us, who is touched with our infirmities and temptations; by whom we may have ſo ſolid conſolation in all the pangs of our tormented conſciences, and in whom we have a ſolid foundation laid down to all that flee to him, for ſetling our faith and hope in the Son of God, who hath of ſet purpoſe, with the Fathers conſent, ſuffered ſo many and great evils that he might redeem us.

4. And hereby we may perceive also how well divine Justice is satisfied, and with what warrand the consciences of the weak believers may be quieted, who so use to exaggerat the grievousnesse and the multitude of their sins, that they forget to put a right estimation upon the satisfaction made by Christ for all that come unto God through him.

The third article.

THe third article of the covenant of Redemption, past between the Father and the Son, concerneth the benefits, gifts and graces to be given unto the redeemed: all which gifts and graces, are summarily comprehended in that one gift of God, spoken of, *Joh.* 4. 10. which gift is Christ, who is freely offered unto, and given to, the elect believer for righteousnesse and eternall life, according to what was said, *Isa. 9. 6. for, unto us a child is born, a Son is given, on whose shoulders the government is laid, whose Name is called Jehovah, the wonderfull counsellour, the strong God, the eternall Father and Prince of peace.* And, 2 Pet. 1. 3. *who according to his divine power, hath given unto us all things which pertain to life and godlinesse, through the knowledge of Him who hath called us to vertue and glory.*

2. The benefits which are appointed for the redeemed, are so conveyed and brought unto them, that first, they are Christs riches which he hath purchased unto the elect, and being resolved to die, that the purchase might be made fast to his people, he hath made his latter Will and Testament once and again, and left in legacy to all that believe in him, all things which belong to righteousnesse and salvation; and these benefits, in an acceptable time, he effectually applieth and puts them in possession thereof. Of which gifts, we shall name chiefly three: the first is regeneration, or turning of the man toward himself; the second is the gift of saving faith; the third is perseverance. In which three gifts, the patrons and magnifiers of the power of mans free-will, do what in them lieth to obscure the glory of Gods free

free grace, by glorying that without the speciall grace of God they can convert themselves or not, as they please, so that when God intends their conversion, and useth all means for their conversion, they are able to resist all his gracious operation, and make void his purpose and endeavour. But this covenant of Redemption, past between the Father and the Son, Mediatour and Redeemer, doth decide the question and give them the lie: for, *only they whom God did foreknow, did he predestinat to be conform to the image of His Son---and whom he did predestinat, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified*, Rom. 8. 28.

Concerning these three gifts.

IT is agreed between God and Christ, that the elect shall be converted invincibly and infallibly, and that saving faith shall be bestowed on them, and that they shall persevere in the obedience of faith so, as they shall not totally and finally fall away from Gods grace.

It is promised to Christ, *Psal.* 110. 3. that *in the day of His power, His people shall be willing*; for, albeit the native corruption of their will, opposeth it self and resisteth the holy Spirit, when he is using the means to convert them, yet in an acceptable time, the invincible power of Gods free grace toward them, so taketh away all actuall resistance, that the man, unwilling of himself, is made most freely and heartily willing to be reconciled to God: for, God can both preserve the naturall liberty of the will, and take from it that crookedness and frowardness that is in it; he can infuse and creat in the man a right spirit, and new habits of grace, and can bring forth these habits unto exercise, making the redeemed man not only able to will, but also actually *to will* and *to do* what is pleasant to him, *Philip.* 2. 13. and, *Ephes.* 2. 8. we are taught, that *faith is not of our selves, it is the gift of God; not of works, least any man should boast.* And this gift of saving faith, is bestowed only on the elect; and therefore it is called the faith of the

elect,

elect, *Tit.* 1. 1. and only they believe in Jesus Christ, *that are ordained unto eternall life, Acts* 13. 48. yea, every one cometh to Christ, who is given to him of the Father, *Joh.* 6. 37. and no man cometh to Christ, save he whom the Father draweth, *Joh.* 6. 44. but they that are not redeemed, do not come to Christ for righteousnesse and life, *Joh.* 10. 26. *ye believe not*, saith Christ to some Jews, *because ye are not of my sheep, My sheep hear My voice and I know them, and they follow Me.*

As for *perseverance*, the Father promiseth to the Son, that the work of grace shall be firm in all the redeemed ones, or in his elect seed, *Isa.* 59. 21. *as for Me* (saith the Lord to Christ) *this is my covenant with them, my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* And, Jer. 32. 40. *I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.*

And a speciall command is given unto Christ, for preserving all unto eternall life who come unto him, *Joh.* 6. 39. *this is the Fathers will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day*: which Christ undertakes, that he will faithfully perform, *Joh.* 10. 28. while he saith, *I give unto them eternall life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand*, &c. But, that we insist not too long in this argument (whereof the Orthodox divines have written abundantly in their disputations against the foresaid errour) because the adversaries take their pretended arguments from the instability of mens will, in the mater of perseverance, and from the freedom and power of mans changeable will in the mater of conversion and saving faith, and from the maner of Gods speaking to the mixed multitude of both called and not chosen, and to them that are both called and chosen, we shall content our-

selves

ſelves for clearing this covenant betwixt the Father and the Son, Mediatour and Redeemer, to make the mater faſt concerning the elect, founding their converſion, faith, repentance, perſeverance, and ſalvation, upon the unchangeable covenant of Redemption, fixed upon the ſetled agreement between God, and God the Son Mediatour and Redeemer, as ſhall be proven from five places of Scripture.

The firſt proof, is from verſ. 13. of Iſa. *52. to the end of Chap. 53.*

THe firſt place is *Iſa. 52. verſ. 13.* and forward to the end of chapter 53. where we have, firſt, the two parties contracters, God the Father, and Chriſt; for, the Father brings forth his confederat Son to be incarnat by covenant, his ſervant, whom he imployes in the whole work of Redemption, as the meritorious cauſe and accompliſher of it; *behold My ſervant*, ſaith God the Father by his Spirit, ſpeaking by the Prophet, *Chap. 52. 13. Next*, both parties are ſure of the event of the paction, and of the accompliſhing of the whole work glorioufly, *behold*, (ſaith he) *My ſervant ſhall deal prudently and proſperouſly, He ſhall be exalted and extolled and be very high*, verſ. 13. *Thirdly*, he tells the proper price, which Chriſt the Son ſhall pay for the Redemption of his people, agreed upon by paction, to wit, the exinanition and humbling of the Son incarnat unto the ignominious death of the croſſe, *that His viſage ſhall be marred more then any man, and His form more then the ſons of men*, verſ. 14. and more particularly, *Chap. 53. 2. He hath no form nor comelineſſe, and when we ſhall ſee Him, there is no beauty that we ſhould deſire Him, He is deſpiſed, and rejected of men, a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief*, &c. verſ. 2. 3. *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions*, verſ. 5. *He ſhall make his Soul an offering for ſin*, verſ. 10.

Fourthly, Chriſt the Son of God incarnat, is aſſured and confirmed of the ſweet fruit of his paſſion in the converſion

conversion of many nations, whom he should sprinkle with the blood of the covenant and sanctifie by the water of His holy Spirit, Chap. 52. 15. *He shall sprinkle many nations, &c.*

Fiftbly, God and Christ are agreed and well pleased in the conversion of so many as are elected, and given to Christ, to have in Him the right of adoption, *Chap.* 53. 10. *He shall see his seed*, that is, He shall regenerat the elect, and make them His children, and see them so, to His satisfaction.

Sixthly, no meritorious nor impulsive cause is found in the persons redeemed, for which the punishment due to them should be transferred upon the Mediatour Christ our Redeemer; for, they should be found in themselves but despisers of Christ, because of His sufferings, Chap. 53. 4. *Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.*

Seventhly, no sin nor meritorious cause of punishment is found in Christ the Redeemer, for which He should be smitten, Chap. 53. 5. 9. *He was wounded for our transgressions---- he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.*

Eigthly, peace and reconciliation and healing of our sinfull and miserable sicknesses, and deliverance from wrath, are purchased by the price of His blood, Chap. 53. 5. *the chastisment of our peace, was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*

Ninthly, these sufferings Christ did not endure unwittingly, or unwillingly, but by consent, by covenant deliberatly, Chap. 53. 7. *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.*

Tenthly, the cause of this covenant, whereby the price is called for and yielded unto, and payed, is the only free grace of God and His good pleasure, Chap. 53. 10. *It pleased the Lord to bruise him, He hath put him to grief.*

Eleventhly,

Eleventhly, It is agreed between the Father and the Son, that our ſins ſhould be imputed unto Him, and His righteouſneſſe imputed unto us, and that the redeemed ſhould believe in him and ſo be juſtified, Chap. 53. 11. *he ſhall ſee of the travell of his Soul, and ſhall be ſatisfied, by his knowledge*, or faith in Him, *ſhall My righteous ſervant juſtifie many: for he ſhall bear their iniquities.*

Twelfthly, It is agreed between the parties, that for whom Chriſt ſhould lay down His life, He ſhould ſtand interceſſour alſo, for bringing unto them all the purchaſed graces and bleſſings, Chap. 53. 11. *he bare the ſins of many, and made interceſſion for the tranſgreſſours*: the reſt of the world beſide the elect, He interceeded not for, *Joh.* 17. 9. 10.

Hence it followeth, that God and Chriſt did not bargain for the Redemption of all and every man; no not for the Redemption, converſion and ſalvation of all and every man to whom the Goſpel was to be preached: for, many were to be called, who were not choſen, to whom the gift of ſaving faith was not to be given, nor the power of God to ſalvation was never to be revealed; and this is the obſervation which the Evangeliſt makes upon the 1. of *Iſa.* 53. *Joh.* 12. 37. &c. *But though he had done ſo many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him, that the ſaying of the prophet Iſaiah might be fulfilled which he ſpake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? therefore they could not believe, becauſe* Iſaiah *ſaid again*, (*Iſa.* 6. 9. 10.) *he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts*, &c.

Secondly, it followeth hence, that election and Redemption were not for the forefeen faith or works of the elect redeemed, but of the meer grace and goodwill of God, and all done for them and in them, contrair to their deſervings: for, it is ſaid, *Iſa.* 53. 6. *all we, like ſheep have gone aſtray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

Thirdly, it followeth hence, that it was agreed upon, that

that saving grace and conversion and sanctification should infallibly and invincibly come to passe and be given to the redeemed, *Isa.* 52. 13. *Behold, My servant shall deal prudently and prosperously*; and, *vers.* 15. *he shall sprinkle many nations*; and, *Isa.* 53. 11. *by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justifie many.*

Fourthly, hence it followeth, that the agreement is past for their finall perseverance and full salvation: for, *Isa.* 53. 5. *with his stripes we are healed*: now our healing, is our full salvation from our sin and misery, or our deadly sicknesses. And, *Isa.* 53. 10. *the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand*: the pleasure of the Lord is partly our sanctification, 1 *Thes.* 4. 3. *partly, our salvation and glorification*, Joh. 6. 39. *this is the Fathers will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing; but should raise it up again at the last day.* And to this purpose powerfully doth his intercession serve, from which the Apostle concludes, that believers shall be perfectly saved, *Heb.* 7. 25. *wherefore he is able also to save to the uttermost, them that come to God by him, seing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

The second proof is from Isa. 59. 20. 21.

THe second place is from *Isa.* 59. 20. 21. where, first, we have the parties agreeing pointed at: the Lord Jehovah saith and of the *Redeemer* He saith, that He shall come to Zion as *Redeemer*. Next, we have the kind of agreement between the parties, God on the one hand, and the *Redeemer* with the redeemed, for whom and in whose name he makes the agreement; *this is my Covenant with them*, but first with Christ, as the words following do shew. Thirdly, we have the party redeemed, *Zion* and *Jacob* that turn from transgression, which is the mark of true believers in Christ and of the elect, for whom this grace is appointed, as *Rom.* 11. 7. *Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.* And, *Rom.* 11. 26. *all this Israel shall be saved*, as it is written.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, we have the ſort of their delivery, which ſhall be not only by price paying, but alſo by powerfull and *effectuall working*, as the originall imports, *Rom.* 11: 26. and, *Iſa.* 59. 20. Fifthly, the benefits beſtowed upon the elect, are comprehended under the deſignation of the *redeemed*; they are to be turned from their iniquity by effectuall converſion, by granting them faith in Chriſt, repentance and reconciliation. Sixthly, it is ſhewed how theſe graces ſhall be brought to paſſe, to wit, by application thereof by the word and Spirit of Chriſt; from which, ſanctification, ſalvation, and the perpetuation of all graces unto ſalvation, do flow and follow on them; *My Spirit that is in thee*, ſaith the Lord to the Redeemer incarnat, *and My word which I have put in thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeed*, &c.

Theſe articles of the covenant of Redemption make expreſly, firſt, againſt univerſall Redemption of all and every man: becauſe Chriſt, as is ſhewed before, makes his bargain for the elect, and leaves the reſt in blindneſs, and is a Redeemer of none but of theſe to whom He is a deliverer *actually*, from whom He turneth away iniquity and ungodlineſſe; which benefits befall none, but the elect and the redeemed.

Next, they make againſt election *for faith and foreſeen works*, becauſe when Chriſt cometh to call in the Jews, He findes nothing commendable in them but impiety and tranſgreſſion and defection, and whatſoever might provoke Him to reject them; *they are turned from tranſgreſſion.*

Thirdly, they make againſt a *meer poſſible* and *contingent converſion*: for, invincible grace is promiſed here; for, the word and the Spirit of Chriſt ſhall take up a dwelling in them, and not depart from them.

Fourthly, they make againſt the doctrine of the Apoſtaſie of the ſaints, and uncertainty of their perſeverance, becauſe here it is promiſed to Chriſt, that from the heart and mouth of His ſeed, the word and Spirit of Chriſt ſhall never depart.

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The third proof is from, Joh. 6. 37. &c.

THe third place is, *Joh. 6.* from, v. 37. to 45. where, first, is ſet down the party contracters in the Covenant of redemption; for, the Elect are given over into the hand of Chriſt by the Father; *All that the Father giveth to me, cometh to me,* v. 37.

Secondly, upon the Fathers giving of the Elect unto Chriſt, followeth, in due time, the converſion and ſaving faith of the redeemed; *All that the Father giveth me, cometh to me,* ſaith Chriſt.

Thirdly the redeemed are committed unto Chriſt, as to their leading on, preſervation and perfecting of their ſalvation; *This is the Fathers will which hath ſent me, that of all which he hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt day.*

Fourthly, it is agreed by what means the faith of the redeemed ſhall be formed in them, which are, the revealed ſight of Chriſt the Son of God in the Word; the powerfull drawing of the illuminat ſoul unto Chriſt, which powerfull draught overcometh all oppoſition and reſiſtence, becauſe it is omnipotent and invincible: for, *no man cometh to Chriſt, but he whom the Father draweth,* v. 44. and that by making them ſavingly, and in a lively maner ſee the Son and believe on him. v. 40.

Hence followeth, 1. that it is falſe Doctrine to teach, that there is an univerſal redemption unto life of all and every man; becauſe not all, but only ſome are given, and made to come to Chriſt; the reſt that are not given, come not.

Secondly, it followeth, that Election is of meer free grace; becauſe men come not unto Chriſt that they may be given, but they are given unto Chriſt, that they may be brought and come unto him.

Thirdly, by this agreement, the powerfull converſion of the redeemed and their powerfull preſervation unto eternal life, is as certain as the power, and conſtancy, and obedience of Chriſt unto the Father, is firm and certain;

certain; *This is the will of him that sent me, that of what he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day*, ver. 39.

The fourth proof is, Joh. 10. 14.

THe fourth place is, *Joh.* 10. from v. 14. to v. 30. where we see, that the Lord Jesus, the true Pastor of *Israel*, before he was incarnat, *Ps.* 23. continueth in that same office now, being incarnat, and gives his people to understand this, when he saith, *I am the good shepherd.*

Secondly, the care and custody of all the redeemed, both converted and unconverted, was put upon Christ, v. 14. 16. *I know my sheep, and am known of mine; and other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring in, and they shall hear my voice.*

Thirdly, the price of their redemption is clearly agreed upon, v. 15. *As the Father knows me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep.*

Fourthly, the Father accepts the price, and is satisfied and well pleased with it, v. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it up again*, &c.

Fifthly, all the redeemed are infallibly converted, but they that are not redeemed are not converted, v. 27, *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me*; and, v. 26. *but ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.*

Sixthly, albeit the redeemed and converted shall not want enemies, who shall go about to mar their perseverance and salvation, yet shall they not prevail, v. 28. *I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

Hence followeth, first, that the doctrine of universal redemption of all and every man unto life is false; because only the redemption of the elect sheep is agreed upon, for whom he layeth down his life, v. 15. and the rest are not redeemed nor ordained to life, for these he

speaks to, v. 26. they were not of his sheep, but remained unbelievers.

Secondly, it followeth, that the election of men is not for faith or works fore-seen, but on the contrary, faith is ordained to be given unto the redeemed, because they are elected and given over unto Christ to convert and save them, v. 16. *other sheep I have, and them I must bring in, and they shall hear my voice.*

Thirdly, it followeth, that the conversion of the Elect doth not depend on their will, but upon Christs undertaking to make them believe and upon His omnipotency, *vers.* 16. *other sheep I have, and them I must bring in and they shall hear my voice.*

Fourthly, it followeth, that albeit the redeemed believers be in themselves witlesse as sheep, and weak, and ready to be destroyed, and compassed about with many enemies as sheep among wolves, yet because of the omnipotency of the Father and of the Son, that have taken the care and custody of them, they shall persevere, and it is impossible they should perish or not persevere. *Joh.* 10. 28. 29. *I give them eternall life; and they shall never perish, and none can take them out of My Fathers hand.*

The fifth proof.

THe fifth place is *Psa.* 40. explicat by the Apostle, *Heb.* 10. 5. 6. 7. where, first, the Spirit of God expounds the covenant whereof we are speaking, and brings in the parties, God and Christ as speaking one to another, and as it were, in our sight and audience, repeating the terms thereof. The price of Redemption is first spoken of, for expiation of sin, not to be forgiven without blood, without better blood then the blood of beasts, *Heb.* 10. 4.

Secondly, all satisfactions by men, and whatsoever price can be payed by meer man, are rejected; *Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldest not,* vers. 5.

Thirdly, nothing except only the incarnation of the Son the Mediatour, His obedience and suffering to the death,

death, could ſatisfie divine Juſtice; *But a body haſt thou prepared Me*, verſ. 5.

Fourthly, the Mediatour Chriſt offers Himſelf pledge and Surety of His own accord, and takes the condition; *then ſaid I, lo, I come*, to wit, as *Surety* to pay the ranſom and *to do thy will*, Heb. 10. 7.

Fifthly, Chriſt the Surety, not only condeſcends upon the price, but alſo upon the perſons to be redeemed, and their ſanctification; *by which will we are ſanctified, by the offering of the body of Chriſt once for all*: and this price is now actually payed, *Heb.* 10. 10.

Sixthly, the price being payed, the Mediatour goeth about the application of the purchaſed benefits, by His interceſſion, *Heb.* 10. 12. 13. *this man after he had offered one ſacrifice for ſin for ever, ſat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footſtool.*

Hence followeth, firſt, that there is no univerſall Redemption of all and every man unto life, *becauſe by one offering he hath perfected for ever, them that are ſanctified*, Heb. 10. 14. therefore they were never redeemed, who are never ſanctified; and only they are perfected, who are redeemed.

Secondly, it followeth, that not for any thing in man, neither fore-ſeen faith or works, are men elected and redeemed, becauſe all is rejected that meer man can do, that the meer grace of God may appear in Chriſts undertaking for men of His own accord; *Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldeſt not, then ſaid I, behold I come*, Heb. 10. 5. 7.

Thirdly, by Chriſts death, purchaſe is made of the infallible converſion and ſanctification of the redeemed, and of their perſeverance unto perfection. *By one offering of Chriſt He hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified*, Heb. 10. 14. and therefore the redeemed cannot but be converted, cannot but be ſanctified, cannot but perſevere unto perfection, and that for ever, *Heb.* 10. 12, 13, 14.

The use of this article is, first, that all these who hear the Gospel, and have in any sort embraced it, should in the acknowledgement of their naturall corruption and perverse wickednesse, humble themselves before God, and pray for, and expect grace according to the promises offered in the Gospel.

Secondly, that they who are already sensible of their sins and ill deservings, may not run away or be discouraged, but so much the rather, flee to Christ in whom relief from sin and misery is promised to such.

Thirdly, that they who have fixed their eye on the Son, resolving to cleave unto him, should acknowledge the powerfull draught of Gods almighty hand, who hath caused them to come to Christ, and should upon the begun work of grace, conceive lively hope of salvation, and study to purifie their souls in this hope.

Fourthly, that they who find the instability and inconstancy of their own free-will, and have experience of their own heart, deceiving them frequently, after they have ingaged themselves by promises and vows to take better heed to their wayes, should not cast away their confidence in Christ, because of their own infirmity, but that they should lean lesse to their own strength, and lay hold on Christs power, fidelity and constancy so much the more, for to help the weak at such a dead lift. The Apostle, looking to Christs engagement in the covenant, for those who in any measure of sincerity adhere unto him, hath said, 1 *Cor.* 1. 8. 9. *Christ shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blamelesse in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithfull, by whom ye are called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Fifthly, let us not take the guiding of our own free-will, but let so many as are fled to Christ, give him the glory of the inclining of our heart to his testimonies, and to his obedience in any measure, and know that every spirituall motion floweth from his purchase, and application of what is bestowed on us. And when we find his hand withdrawing, and our heart inclining

to what is not right, let us run to him to right it, in hope to be helped by his grace to fight againſt whatſoever adverſary of our ſalvation.

The fourth article.

AS to the fourth article of the covenant of Redemption, it concerneth the means and maner how the elect ſhall be called forth from the periſhing world, and be effectually called and turned unto God, ſo as the world among whom the elect do live, ſhall not have cauſe of ſtumbling juſtly: for, he hath taken a moſt wiſe courſe ſo to execute the decree of election and Redemption, as he ſhall be ſure to bring in his own to himſelf, and not open up his counſell in particular to the diſcouraging of any, as is told by the father, *Iſa.* 52. 13. *My ſervant ſhall deal prudently and proſper.* The chief mean appointed, is the preaching of the Goſpel to all nations, commanding all men, where the Goſpel is by Gods providence preached, to repent and believe in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, and to love one another as he hath commanded them, *Acts* 17. 30. and, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. and they who refuſe to obey are without excuſe.

Another mean is, the bringing of ſo many as profeſſe their acceptation of the offer of grace by Chriſt Jeſus, them and their children into the bond of an expreſſe ſolemn covenant, that they ſhall ſubmit themſelves to the doctrine and government of Chriſt, and teach their children ſo to do, as *Abraham* the father of believers did, *Gen.* 18. 19. *Matth.* 28. 19. 20. *make diſciples of all nations*, or, *make all nations diſciples to Me.*

A third mean is, the ſealing of the covenant by the Sacrament of baptiſm, *Matth.* 28. 19. 20. *make all nations diſciples to Me, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.*

A fourth mean is, the gathering them into all lawfull and poſſible communion with others his diſciples, that by their Church-fellowſhip one with another, they may be edified under their officers, appointed in Chriſts Teſtament

ſtament to feed, govern and lead them on in the obedience of all the commands which Chriſt hath commanded his people in his Teſtament: by which means he goeth about his work, and doth call effectually, ſanctifie and ſave, his own redeemed ones, leaving all others without excuſe.

Concerning all theſe and other means and maner alſo of executing his decree, it is agreed upon between the Father and His Son Chriſt, as His holy Spirit hath revealed it to us in Scripture. All which may be taken up in two heads; the one is the agreement about the doctrine, and directions given to His Church; the other is about actions, operations, and all effects to be brought about for making his word good.

Concerning his doctrine, Chriſt ſaith, *Joh.* 12. 49. 50. *I have not ſpoken of my ſelf, but the Father who hath ſent me, he gave me a commandment what I ſhould ſay, and what I ſhould ſpeak, and I know, that his commandment is life everlaſting, whatſoever I ſpeak therefore, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak.*

Concerning actions and operations, and the execution of the decrees, it is agreed alſo between the Father and the Son, *Joh.* 8. 16. *If I judge, my judgement is true: for, I am not alone, but I and the Father that ſent me*; and, verſ. 29. *He that ſent me, is with me, the Father hath not left me alone: for, I do always theſe things that pleaſe him*; and Joh. 6. 38. *I came down from heaven, not to do my own will* (without the conſent of the Father) *but the will of him that ſent me.*

In a word, the conſent and agreement of the Father and the Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, is ſuch, that the Son doth nothing by his Spirit, but that which the Father doth work by the ſame Spirit from the beginning of the world, *Joh.* 5. 17. *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*; and, Col. 1. 16. *for by Chriſt were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him. He is al-*

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pha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first efficient, and the last end of all things. Rev. 1. 8. because for the glory of Christ, the creation, the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, were made, and had, and shall have their full execution, all for the glory of God in Christ, by whom all things were made and do subsist.

CHAP. V.

Of the Covenant of works.

WE have spoken of the first divine covenant, wherein God, and God incarnat are the parties; it followeth to speak of the next divine covenant, to wit, the covenant of works between God and man, *Adam* and his posterity, made in mans integrity. In which covenant, God is only the one party of the covenant, and man created with all naturall perfections, is the other party. In this covenant, mans continuing in a happy life, is promised, upon condition of perfect personall obedience, to be done by him out of his own naturall strength bestowed upon him, as the Apostle teacheth us, Gal. 3. 12. *the Law is not of faith, but the man who shall do these things shall live by them.* And unto this law or covenant of works, is added a threatning of death in case man should transgresse: the sense whereof is told by the Apostle, *Gal.* 3. 10. *cursed is every one who doth not abide in all things, that are written in the book of the Law to do them.*

The difference between the law, and the Covenant of works.

THe word *Law*, is sometime taken for the mater or substance of the law of nature, written in the hearts of our first Parents by creation; the work of which law, is to be found in the hearts of their posterity unto this day. And in this sense the word *Law*, is taken by the Apostle, *Rom.* 2. 15. *the Gentiles* (saith he) *shew the wrok of the Law written in their hearts, their con-*

science also bearing witnesse, &c. Sometime the word, is taken for the formall covenant of works, as *Gal.* 3. 10. *as many as are of the works of the Law*, that is, under the covenant of works, *are under the curse*; for, it is written, *cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written*, in the book of the law, *to do them*:

2. The law as it is taken for the covenant of works, differeth from the law of nature, written by creation in the hearts of our first Parents; first, because the law of nature, written in the heart of man, in order both of nature, and time, went before the covenant made for keeping that law; because the covenant for keeping that law, was not made till after mans creation, and after his bringing into the garden to dresse it and to keep it, *Gen.* 2. 16. 17.

Secondly, God by vertue of the law written in mans heart, did not obliedge Himself to perpetuat mans happy life: for, albeit man had keeped that law most acuratly, God was free to dispose of Him as he saw fit before he made the covenant with him; But so soon as he made the covenant, he oblieged himself to preserve him in a happy life, so long as he should go on in obedience to his law and commands, according to the tennor of the covenant, *do this and live*.

Thirdly, death was the naturall wages and merit of sin, albeit there had no covenant been made at all: for, sin against God, deserveth, of its own nature, death of soul and body, by the rule of simple justice, whether the sinner had consented to the punishment or not. But man by entering in the covenant actually gave a formall voluntary consent, that death should sease upon him, if he should sin, as *Evah* beareth witnesse in her conference with the serpent, while she doth repeat the condition put upon the breaking of the particular command given by God, and accepted by man, *Gen.* 3. 3.

Fourthly, when the covenant of works is abolished so far, as it can neither justifie, nor condemn the man that is fled to Christ, and entered in another posterior

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covenant of grace, the naturall obligation of the man ſtandeth ſtill, for taking direction from, and giving obedience to, the law; for, it remaineth ſtill the rule of a mans walking, and it is impoſſible that a meer man ſhould be exeemed from the authority of God over him, and from ſubjection due by nature to his Creatour: for upon this account, that man is a reaſonable creature, underſtanding Gods will about his behaviour toward God, he is alwayes bound for ever to love God with all his mind, heart and ſtrength, and his neighbour as himſelf. Neither can the naturall merit of ſin be taken away, nor death deſerved be eſhewed but by forgiveneſſe of it for Chriſts merits.

The covenant then was ſuperadded unto the law in the deep wiſdom of God: for, this way of dealing with man by a Covenant, was, of its own nature, a moſt fit mean unto mans felicity, and unto the glory of God.

How the Covenant of God with man was a mean to mans felicity.

THe Covenanting of God with man, tended of its own nature to mans good and happineſs.

Firſt, becauſe a ſingular reſpect and honour was put upon man, when he was made a confederat friend of God: for, if it be an honour to a mean and poor man to be joyned with a King or Prince in a formal bond of mutual friendſhip, how much greater honour is it unto man, to be joyned in a bond of mutual love and friendſhip with God?

Secondly, before the making of the Covenant, man had no promiſe made to him by God, but ſo ſoon as the Covenant was made, the Lord did freely obliege himſelf to give, and made to man a right to ask, and to expect of God, with a ground of certainty, to obtain of him ſuch things, as without promiſe paſt he could not ask, or at leaſt, he could not certainly expect to have granted unto him.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, before the making of the Covenant, nothing hindred the Lord, if he had pleased, to command man to return to dust whereof he was; but after the Covenant, it pleased God, by his own free promise, to obliege himself to perpetuat mans happiness wherein he was made, so long as he should go on in obedience.

Fourthly, by the making of the Covenant, a door was opened, and a fair entry to a higher degree of felicity then he possessed by his creation: for, when a natural life and earthly felicity was given to *Adam* to enjoy upon the earth, God, by the Covenant, made paction with him upon condition of perfect obedience, to give him a life and felicity super-natural, opposite unto death bodily and spiritual, which was threatned unto him if he should transgress the command.

Fifthly, *Adam*, by the Covenant, had a sort of help to make him keep the Law written in his heart more carefully and cautiously, and a prop to make him stand more fixed: for, on the one hand, he was advertised and forewarned of the danger of sinning, that he might beware to offend God; and on the other hand, he was encouraged and allowed to serve God more chearfully, and to perform due obedience to God the more diligently: for, in the Covenant, the greatest reward that could be thought upon was set before him, and promised unto him; to wit, eternal life upon his obedience, and the greatest punishment threatned if he should dis-obey; both which served greatly to move him to be constant in his obedience.

How Gods covenanting with man served for Gods glory.

IN Gods covenanting with man, his glory did notably shine and shew forth it self to man. First, the goodness and bounty of God, did manifest it self therein: for, in making a Covenant with man, the Lord demitted himself, and in a maner humbled himself to deal with man for the standing of mutual friendship between himself

ſelf and man for ever: and when we conſider this, as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *Pſ.* 8. 4. *What is man that thou art mindfull of him? and the Son of man that thou viſiteſt him?* So may we ſay, what is man? or the Son of man that thou ſhouldeſt enter in covenant with him?

Secondly, by covenanting with man, God did ſhow his wonderfull moderation: for, God is ſoveraign Monarch and abſolute Emperour over his own creature, to make of it what he pleaſeth; yet, in covenanting with man, he did ſweetly temper his ſupreamacy, ſeeking, as it were, to reign with mans conſent. And when becauſe of his ſoveraign Authority and abſolute Right and Intereſt, he might have put upon man harder commands and conditions of the Covenant, and theſe alſo altogether righteous and juſt, he chooſed to uſe ſuch moderation, that he would require nothing of man, except that which man ſhould, and behoved in reaſon judge both a juſt and an eaſie yoke, and in accepting the condition of the Covenant, acknowledge it to be ſuch.

Thirdly, the Lord declared his wiſdom in covenanting with man, becauſe when he had made man a reaſonable creature, he chooſed to draw forth a free and voluntary ſervice, moſt ſuteable to his reaſonable nature, and that in a moſt ſweet way; to wit, not only by giving unto man a moſt equitable Law, but alſo by ſetting before the man, by way of paction, the higheſt reward that he could be capable of, even life everlaſting.

Fourthly, in covenanting with man, God did moſt wiſely and holily have a reſpect to the glory of his own, both ſoveraignty and holineſs; becauſe after he had made man by nature good and holy (albeit mutable and ſubject to change, if the man pleaſed to eſſay another way) he took courſe to help the mutability of his free will, not only by ſetting a reward of obedience before him, but alſo by a threatniug of puniſhment, if he ſhould tranſgreſs, and ſo on the one hand and the

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other to hedge him in, and guard him againſt all temptation unto ſin, that neither he ſhould be forced by any external power to ſin, nor by any counſel or ſuggeſtion or moral ſwaſion (whereunto only man was expoſed in the tryal of his obedience) ſhould have ſo ſtrong motives to draw him to diſobedience, as the promiſe of God and the threatning ſhould have force in all reaſon, to keep him faſt to his due and loyal obedience. Thus was *Adam* fore-warned and fore-armed againſt whatſoever, without himſelf, might aſſault him: for, what reward for diſobedience could be offered unto him, ſo great as the favour of God and everlaſting life in the fellowſhip of God promiſed to him, if he continued faſt in obedience? and what terror could be ſo great to affright and skar him from ſin, as the threatning of death bodily and ſpiritual, if he tranſgreſſed?

Queſt. But the profane curioſity of man dareth to ask a reaſon, why God did not make man both good by nature and immutably good alſo?

Anſ. It is indeed proud curioſity to enquire for reaſons of God's holy will, which hath its own moſt ſufficient reaſon in its ſelf, and may ſatisfie all his ſubjects, who will not deviliſhly prefer their own wiſdom and counſel to his: But we ſhall content our ſelves ſoberly to anſwer the queſtion thus; To be both *originally*, or by nature good, and *unchangeably* good alſo, beſeemeth God himſelf only, as his property and prerogative, which it became his Majeſty to reſerve to himſelf as the fountain of all goodneſs, and not to communicat this glory either to Man or Angel in their creation, that the due diſtance between God and the natural perfections of the creature, ſhould not only be provided for, but made manifeſt to the creature alſo. It's true, Chriſts humane nature, was ſo ſanctified in his conception, that there was no poſſibility that ſin ſhould be in it; but let us conſider, that Chriſts perſon which did aſſume the humane nature into perſonal union with his God-head, is not a creature; and to aſſume the humane

humane nature into a personal union with his divine nature, is the proper priviledge of God over all, blessed for ever. And what the humane nature of Christ hath of holiness, it hath it not of it self, but of grace from the second person of the God-head, who did assume it. And the Angels that stood when the mutability of angelical nature was manifested in the fall of many of them, did stand by the grace of free confirmation of them in their station.

Fifthly, God in covenanting with man, made way for the demonstration of his most holy Justice in the execution of punishment, which was not only the natural wages and deserved reward of sin, but also by paction and covenant appointed by mutual consent of parties, if man, so much obliged to God, should break so equitable and easie a command, as was given to try him by, being fore-warned of his danger.

Sixthly, this way of covenanting with man, was a most holy and fit mean to manifest the vanity and instability of the most perfect creature, except in the exercise of all its abilities and habits, it do acknowledge God, and in every thing less and more, constantly imploy him, and depend upon him.

Last of all, this was a most holy mean to bring forth to light the grace and mercy of God in Christ, providing a remedy for fallen man before he fell, and to open up the decree and covenant of Redemption in due time to be brought about by Christ, to the glory of God in Christ, by whom, and *for whom all things were made*, Col. 1. 16.

Quest. Had this Covenant of works no Mediatour, no Surety ingaged for *Adam* and all his posterity?

Ans. No Mediatour was in this Covenant; for, the party on the one hand, was God, and on the other hand was *Adam* and *Eve* our common parents, standing upon the ground of their natural abilities, representing and comprehending all their natural off-spring; and according to the condition of the Covenant in their

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own name and name of their posterity, promising obedience, and receiving the condition of life if they continued, and of death in case they failed, *Gen.* 2. 17. In whose sin we all have sinned, *Rom.* 5. 12.

Now, the necessity of a Mediatour, did not appear in this Covenant so long as it stood, that afterward in the making of another Covenant it might more timously appear. First, because man, being created holy according to the image of God, was the friend of God while he had not sinned; and again his service, while he stood in obedience, was very pleasant and acceptable to God, because so long freely and sincerely he served God according to the command and rule written in his heart.

Quest. After that this Covenant was broken, was it not abolished altogether, seing it could not now be any longer perfectly obeyed, nor save us who are sinners?

Answ. Albeit this Covenant, being broken on mans part, did become weak and utterly unable to produce Justification by works, or eternal life to us, by our inherent righteousnesse; yet, on Gods part, the bond of this Covenant, doth stand firm and strong against all men by nature for their condemnation, who are not reconciled to God: Wherefore all that are not renewed and made friends with God by another Covenant of faith in God incarnat (the seed of the woman, who destroyeth the work of the devil) do lye bound under the bond of this Covenant of works, as Christ testifies, *Joh.* 3. 18. *He that believeth on me, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already*; to wit, by the force of the Covenant of works violated by them, and are not delivered from the curse by Christ the Son of God, till they fly to him: And this doth the Apostle confess, speaking of himself and other elect Jews before their regeneration, *Ephes.* 2. 3. *We also were children of wrath, even as others*: for, whosoever is not reconciled to God by Christ, against him doth the

the ſentence of the Law, and curſe for violation of the Covenant, ſtand in force: for, ſinning againſt the Covenant, doth not looſe the man from the Covenant, neither from the obligation to obey it, nor from the puniſhment of breaking it.

Obj. But ſeing a man is utterly unable to obey the Law, or to keep that Covenant, doth not his utter inability excuſe him and diſſolve the bond?

Anſ. No wayes: Becauſe that inability is the fruit of our ſin, and is drawn on by our ſelves; nor doth God loſe his right to crave the debt due to him, becauſe the Bankrupt is not able to pay what he oweth: For, even among men, ſuch as have miſ-ſpent their patrimony, are not abſolved of their debt becauſe they are not able to pay the debt; yea, even the children of the miſ-ſpender of his goods, do ſtand debtors ſo long as the debt is neither payed nor forgiven.

The Covenant of works therefore being broken, the obligation ſtandeth, to make us give obedience ſo much the more in time to come, and becauſe of the curſe pronounced for the breaking of the Covenant in time paſt, the obligation to under-lye the puniſhment for by-gone ſins doth ſtand; and ſo both the obligation to under-lye the puniſhment, and the obligation to give obedience, do ſtand together, while a man is not abſolved from the Covenant of works, by entring in a new Covenant, whereby the debt is payed and the ſinner abſolved.

Whoſoever then conceive, that they may be juſtified from by-gone ſins by their own obedience in time to come, either by way of doing or of ſuffering, they but deceive themſelves, dreaming they can do impoſſibilities; for, the puniſhment to be ſuffered for ſin by the ſinner, is the curſe-everlaſting of ſoul and body, ſeing a meer creature cannot for ever ſatisfie for his rebellion, how long ſoever we preſuppoſe his duration under ſuffering. And for obedience by way of doing perfectly what the Law doth crave, it is utterly impoſſible, becauſe

cauſe we are carnal, ſold under ſin, and cannot ſatisfie the Law; and becauſe we cannot ſatisfie the Law, the Law becometh weak and unable to juſtifie and ſave us, *Rom.* 8. 3.

How the Covenant of works may be called the Covenant of nature.

ALbeit the Law written by nature in mens heart, differeth from the Covenant for performance of the Law, as hath been ſhown before; yet, the Covenant of works made with *Adam* before he fell, tying him to keep that Law, may be called the *Covenant of nature.*

Firſt, becauſe the Covenant of works is grounded upon the Law of nature, and doth exact nothing of man, ſave that which God might require of him according to the Law of nature.

Secondly, becauſe when the Covenant of works was made with *Adam*, it was made with all his natural poſterity, which was to ſpring of him by natural generation: and ſo the obligation thereof did paſs upon all his natural poſterity, by the Law of nature, which maketh the child begotten to bear the image of the begetters.

Thirdly, that the Covenant of works may juſtly be called the Covenant of nature, appeareth by the force of the conſcience being wakened from its ſleepy ſecurity; for, it challengeth for ſin according to that Covenant, and pronounceth the ſentence of God's wrath againſt the ſinner: For, the conſcience doth acknowledge the Judgment of God, *that they which commit ſuch things, are worthy of death*, Rom. 1. 32.

Fourthly, becauſe the conſcience naturally inclineth a man to ſeek juſtification by his own works, if it can any way find pretence for it, as we may ſee in the Phariſee, who in his ſpeech to God, doth judge himſelf a holy man, becauſe he is not amongſt the worſt of men, and hath many good works above others to reckon forth and lay before God, *Luk.* 18. 11.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, the inclination of mans heart, to expect a reward of every good work he doth, whether it be in ſome part reall, or only apparently ſuch, teſtifieth ſo much, *Judg.* 17. 13. *Micah* ſo reaſoneth, *Now know I the Lord will do me good, ſeing I have a Levit to my Prieſt.* And how miſerably the conſcience may be deluded in this caſe, when men do dote upon their own well-deſerving, appeareth in *Leah*: for, Gen. 30. 18. *Leah* ſaith, *God hath given me my hire, becauſe I have given my maiden to my husband.*

Sixthly, this point is alſo made manifeſt by the natural ignorance of righteouſneſs by faith, and affectation to be juſtified by works, which the Apoſtle finds fault-with in the Iſraelits, Rom. 9. 31. *They ſought righteouſneſs not by faith, but as it were by works*: And, Rom. 10. 3. *being ignorant of the righteouſneſs of God, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs* (to wit, righteouſneſs by works, according to the tenour of the Covenant of works) *they did not ſubmit themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God.*

Seventhly, the ſame courſe followed by Papiſts and other erroneous teachers, teſtifieth the natural inclination of men to ſeek righteouſneſs by works according to the tenour of the Covenant of works, and not by faith in Chriſt Jeſus, that righteouſneſs may come by grace only: And ſo are ſome mens hearts glued to this error, that they do transform juſtification by faith in juſtification by one work in ſtead of all, as if the work of faith were the mans righteouſneſs, and not Chriſt himſelf laid hold on by faith: Not conſidering, that to the man that renounceth all confidence in any work of his own, and flieth to Chriſt by faith, *Chriſt is made of God unto that man wiſdom and righteouſneſs,* 1 Cor. 1. 30.

Laſt of all, this natural inclination, even of the regenerat, to ſeek righteouſneſs by works, doth prove the Covenant of works to be naturally ingraft in all mens hearts, as appeareth in the *Galatians*, who being inſtructed in the doctrine of juſtification by faith in

Christ without the works of the Law, did easily upon a tentation offered, look back, with likeing, to the way of Justification by works, for which the Apostle reproveth them, Gal. 4. 21. *Tell me* (saith he) *ye that desire to be under the Law*, or Covenant of works; and ver. 9. *But now after ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to weak and beggarly elements, whereunto you desire again to be in bondage?*

Obj. But, the *Galatians* as it seemeth, did not reject Justification by faith, but did joyn with it Justification by the works of the Law, thinking that the safest way was to joyn both together.

Anſ. The inconsistency of these two wayes of Justification, the Apostle sheweth, *Rom.* 11. 6. For, Justification by grace, is no more by works, otherwise grace is no more grace, and what Justification is by works, is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work. And therefore, the Apostle makes the joyning of these two wayes of Justification to be nothing else but a plain seeking of Justification by the Covenant of works, which cutteth a man off from any benefit by Christ, *Gal.* 5. 2. and whosoever seeketh to be justified by the Law, or Covenant of works, is fallen from grace, *ver.* 4.

For further clearing this matter, we may distinguish two sorts of the Covenant of works: The one is true, genuine, and of God's institution, which God made with all men in *Adam*, for perfect obedience unto God's Law, out of mans own natural abilities. There is another counterfeit, bastard covenant of works, of mans own devising, which a sinner, lying in his sins (unable to do what the Law commands, or to suffer what the Law being broken binds upon him) of his own head deviseth, upon other conditions then God hath set, and will have God to take his devised covenant in stead of perfect obedience to the Law, that so he may be justified. Such was the covenant, which the carnal Israelits made with God in the wilderness, and which

which their posterity did follow, turning the Covenant of grace, whereunto God was calling them, into a covenant of works of their own framing: For, the grace which was offered to them in Christ under the vail of levitical types, figures and ceremonies, they turned into an external service of performance only of bare and dead ceremonies, and into a ministry of the letter and death; for they did not take up Christ to be the end of the Law for righteousnes to every one that believes in him, but did think, that both the moral and ceremonial Law was given unto them of God, to the intent that they should do the external works of the moral Law, so far as they could; and when they transgressed the moral Law, they should fly to the ceremonial Law, and make amends for their faults by satisfying for their sin by the external sacrifice of some clean beast offered to God, or by the washing of their body, and their cloaths. Such also is the covenant, which now adayes many make with God, cutting short, with the old Pharisees, the sense of the precepts of the Law, by extending it no further then they may keep the same, that so they may make their own inherent righteousnes the longer, & conform unto their own clipped rule of righteousnes: and this they do by denying themselves to be guilty of original sin after baptism, and by extenuating and diminishing many faults, as but light and venial as they call them, and by devising satisfactions for expiating the sins of the living, by penances and pilgrimages, and of the dead by their sufferings in their imaginary purgatory, that so they may be justified by their works and sufferings. Such also is their covenant, who seek justification by deceased Saints merits, hoping they may so have absolution from sin, and obtain life eternal. And all these sorts of covenants of mens framing, we call bastard-covenants of works, because God will not admit any other Covenant of works then that which requireth perfect personal obedience. And therefore so many as seek to be justified by works, do stand un-

der the obligation of perfect personal obedience under pain of death, and will be found not only utterly unable to do any good work, but also to be without Christ, and to be fallen from grace, as the Apostle (*Gal.* 5. 3, 4.) doth teach us.

Obj. Seing God doth abhor these bastard-covenants of works, and doth well know, that men are so far from performance of the due obedience of the Law, that they are utterly unable before they be reconciled through faith in Christ, to do so much as one acceptable work, as the Psalmist teacheth, *Psal.* 14. 1, 2, 3. Why doth the Lord exact perfect obedience unto the Law from sinners? why doth he press so instantly the slaves of sin to perform the duties required in the true Covenant of works?

Ans. The Lord justly doth abhor and reject these bastard-covenants, because they evacuat and make void both the Covenant of works and the Covenant of grace which is by faith in Christ; and he doth press all men to perform perfect obedience to all the commands whereunto they are naturally obliged, to the end that proud men, conceity of their own natural abilities, may find by experience, that they are unable to perform the condition of the Covenant of works, and may acknowledge the same, and so dispair of righteousnes by their works, and be forced to flye to Christ, and to the Covenant of grace through him, that they may be fred from that covenant; and being justified by faith in Christ, may be enabled to begin new obedience to the Law in the strength of Christs furniture: For, *Christ is the end of the Law for righteousnes to every one that believeth*, Rom. 10. 4. And the Law entered, that men might by the Law see and acknowledge that the offence did abound, and then might perceive, that the riches of grace by Christ, did super-abound, *Rom.* 5. 20, 21. and, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. *The end of the command, is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience and faith unfained.*

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This was the end of the promulgation of the Law in mount *Sinai*, that a ſtiff-necked people truſting in their own abilities, might be made ſenſible of their imperfection, by the repetition of the Law. And to this alſo God ſuper-added the external yoke of the ceremonial Law, which neither they nor their poſterity were able to bear, *Acts*, 15. 10. that the people perceiving their manifold pollutions and guiltineſs, wherein they were daily involved by breaking of God's Law: might in the ſenſe of the burden lying on them, and of their damnable eſtate under it, flye to Chriſt the lamb of God that takes away the ſins of the world, as he was repreſented and offered to their ſight in the ſacrifices and burnt offerings.

Of this end of preſſing the Law upon proud men, we have an example, *Matth.* 19. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. In the conference of Chriſt with the young conceity rich man, who in the opinion of his own inherent righteouſneſs, and of his abilities, was hudgly ſwelled, as if he had already for time by-gone ſatisfied the the whole Law, and that he was able and ready to do any good work which could be preſcribed unto him, for obtaining of eternal life; whoſe proud conceit that Chriſt might humble and bring down, he craveth nothing but that he would keep the commands: And when the young man denyed that he had broken the Law, he proveth him guilty of groſs and vile Idolatry, from this, that he put a higher eſtimation on his riches than on remiſſion of ſin, and did love them more then heaven and fellowſhip with God in eternal life.

In all this let it be conſidered, that albeit mens confidence in their works, doth diſpleaſe God; yet good works do not diſpleaſe him, but they are ſo far pleaſant unto him, that there is no morall motive which may ſerve to ſtir up in his people, an endeavour to follow after good works, which the Lord doth not make uſe of; partly, by ſetting before them the reward if they obey; partly, by ſetting puniſhments before their

eyes if they obey not: yea, and the very observation of externall morall duties and obedience, such as may be discharged by the unregenerat man (albeit God in relation to Justification do esteem it polluted and vile) yet he doth sometimes reward their externall works by giving them externall and temporall benefits for their encouragement: for, even *Ahabs* temporary humiliation the Lord so far accepted, that there-upon He took occasion to delay to take vengeance upon him, 1 *Kings*, 21. 27, 28, 29. Likewise the Lord useth to recompence the civil justice of Pagans with a temporal reward, yea and to reward the outward diligence of every man in every lawfull occupation, with some answerable outward reward.

The very Pharisees, who for the raising to themselves a fame and higher estimation for holinesse, did take a great deal of pains, in prayers in the streets, and Mercat-places, and other exercises of Religion, wanted not an answerable reward; *verily* (saith Christ) *they have their reward*, Matth. 6. 2.

And this course the Lord doth keep, that he may entertain and foster the civil society of men among themselves, and that His people looking on this bounty of God, may be stirred up the more to bring forth the fruits of faith, in hope of a mercifull promised better reward of grace in the life to come, beside what they may have in this life.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Covenant of Grace.

THe third and last covenant concerning mans eternall salvation, is the covenant of *Grace*, made between God and man, through Christ the Mediatour.

Grace, some times simply and absolutely taken, is opposed to merit; and in this sense, every good thing, which of Gods good pleasure is ordained, or promised,

or

or actually beſtowed on the creature, preſuppoſe innocent, is called *Grace*: becauſe it is impoſſible that a meer creature, can properly merit any good thing of God: becauſe the creature neither hath nor can have, that which it hath not received, *Rom.* 11. 35. *Who hath firſt given to Him, and it ſhall be recompenced to him again?*

Sometime *Grace* is taken for every gift or good, beſtowed by God upon the ill deſerver: in which ſenſe, gifts, common to elect and reprobat, are called by the name of *Grace*, *Rom.* 1. 5. *Epheſ.* 4. 7.

Sometime *Grace* is taken in oppoſition to the pactionall merit of works, or to the reward due by debt covenanted, as *Rom.* 4. 4. *To him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt:* In which ſenſe, *that which is given for works, is not given of grace*, Rom. 11. 16. and in this ſenſe, we take *Grace* as it is oppoſed to the covenant of works: for, the condition of the covenant of works, is the giving perfect obedience to the law; But the condition of the covenant of grace, is the receiving of Chriſt by faith unto righteouſneſſe and life, offered in the Goſpel, without the works of the law; which covenant may thus be deſcribed. The covenant of grace is a contract between God and men, procured by Chriſt upon theſe tearms, that whoſoever in the ſenſe of their own ſinfulneſſe ſhall receive Chriſt Jeſus offered in the Goſpel, for righteouſneſſe and life, ſhall have Him and all the benefits purchaſed by Him, according to the covenant of Redemption; and that God will be his God, and the God of his children. This covenant of grace is founded upon the covenant of *Redemption*, paſt between God and Chriſt, wherein it was agreed, that all the elect given unto Chriſt, ſhall be reconciled in due time to God, and that to this end, this grace ſhould be preached to bring about the reconciliation; and therefore Chriſt is called the *Mediatour of the new covenant*, Heb. 12. 22.

Of Infants intereſt in this Covenant.

Queſt. WHat intereſt have infants in this covenant?

Anſ. The ſame which they had ſince the firſt expreſſe and formall making thereof with *Abraham*, to whom God promiſed to be his God, and the God of his children, whoſe children all are, who are in Chriſt, *Gal.* 3. 27, 28, 29.

For, of the *redeemed* ſome come to age, whom God, having called by the preaching of the Goſpel, doth induce and effectually move to embrace ſolemnly the offered fellowſhip with God and his ſaints in Chriſt, and to conſecrat themſelves and their children unto the ſervice of God. There are other *redeemed* ones, who die in their infancy, before they come to the uſe of reaſon, to whoſe ſalvation God hath expreſſe reſpect in making his covenant with their parents, that he will not have them excluded from the bleſſing, when he calls their parents to him, but in the common offer of grace and reconciliation by Chriſt, he makes the promiſe jointly to the parents and the children; for, in one ſentence, and, as it were, with one breath, He ſaith, *I will be thy God and thy ſeeds after thee*, Gen. 15. 17. whereof the Apoſtle maketh good uſe, *Acts* 2. 39. declaring the promiſe to be made to the Jews and their children, and to the called Gentiles and their children. And upon this ground *Paul* and *Silas*, timeouſly did offer conſolation to the Jailour, trembling and anxious what way he ſhould be ſaved, *Acts* 16. 31. ſaying, *Believe in Chriſt Jeſus, and thou ſhall be ſaved, thou and thy houſe.*

As for the maner how the Lord dealeth with the ſouls of infants in converting them, the Scripture doth not ſpeak, for this lieth among the ſecrets of God, which doth not concern us to ſearch after, *Deut.* 29. 29. It ſhould be ſufficient to us, that God in covenanting with the parents, promiſeth to be the God of their children. And according to this covenant the Lord complains of

their

their slaying and offering their children unto idols, calling them His own sons and daughters, *Ezek.* 16. 20. and upon this ground, in the second command, the Lord promiseth to shew mercy to the thousand generation of believing parents; and, 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. the Apostle doth call the children of one of the parents believing, *holy* children, because of their consecration unto God by the believing confederat parent, and in regard of Gods right and interest in them as the children of His own family by covenant.

And Christ our Lord upon this ground, doth call the children of confederat parents, burgesses of heaven; of such is the kingdom of heaven, *Matth.* 19. 13, 14. and because infants are dedicat to Christ, to be taught and governed by Him in His own way and order, they are called disciples, *Acts* 15. 10. as the disputers for the circumcision of Christians children, as well as of their parents, after the law of *Moses*, do make it manifest: and in the institution of baptism, our Lord gives the priviledge of the covenant unto every *nation*, no lesse then to the *Jews*, that by covenant whole nations might be drawn in and given up as disciples to His doctrine, *Matth.* 28. 29. make all nations disciples by your doctrine, baptizing them, *&c.* that the children with the parents, might be partakers by baptism, of the seal of the covenant for the righteousnesse of faith, no lesse then the children of *Israelites* were by circumcision.

Of the means to draw on the making of this covenant.

OF these means we have spoken in the fourth article of the covenant of Redemption, and need not to insist more about them then to name them.

The first mean to draw men into this blessed covenant, and to keep them in it, is the externall revelation of the will of God, for teaching men how great their sin and misery is, and how they may be reconciled and delivered by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and how they may testifie their thankfulnesse (being reconciled)

ciled) for such a mercy; which grounds of saving knowledge, are fully and faithfully set down in holy Scripture, and committed to His servants in the ministry, who should in preaching of the Gospel, inform and perswade men to repent and imbrace the grace of Christ, and put on His sweet yoke of obedience upon them.

The second mean is, after application of the Lords word to the hearers for convincing them of sin in them, and righteousnesse in Christ, and judgement to follow, to wit, of absolution of the believer, and of condemnation of such as believe not, To receive into the bond of this covenant of grace, all that appear seriously to consecrat themselves and their children to the faith and obedience of the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, without determining whether they be regenerat for the present or not.

The third mean, is the solemn sealing of this covenant, for righteousnesse of faith and salvation through Christ, by baptizing both the parents that accept the covenant, and their children also; and by exhortations, promises and comminations, and all other arguments, which may more and more convince them of their need of Christ, and duty of following Him, to fix and strengthen their hearty purpose to cleave unto the Lord. Such as are, the Lords command to believe in Christ and love one another, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. and His threatening, if they believe not, *Joh.* 3. 18. and, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. 11.

The fourth mean, is the gathering of these that have imbraced this covenant, into all lawfull and possible Church-communion with other His disciples, and fixing them in their severall congregations, that they may be edified under their Officers, appointed by Christ in His Testament in their most holy faith, and obedience of all His ordinances. And for further clearing the way of Gods bringing the visible Church of Christ into this covenant with Himself, let it be considered,

1. Albeit

1. Albeit of those that are come to the use of reason, with whom God doth formally and solemnly make this covenant of *grace* and *reconciliation*, many are externally only called, and few in comparison chosen, *Matth.* 20. 21. yet, it is not the will of God, otherwayes then by doctrine to separat the elect from the rest of them that are externally called, or to make the elects name known to the world: for, the kirk knoweth not, but God only knoweth who are His, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. And therefore He hath ordained means common to the elect and reprobat, to bring both unto the externall embracing of His covenant, and continuing externally therein, and He doth bestow gifts both to the one sort and to the other, and He worketh in both the one sort and the other according to His own will; But as for inward and effectuall calling, or speciall saving graces which do accompany salvation, and the speciall operations of the holy Spirit, He reserveth to the *elect* and *redeemed* only, to whom in a time acceptable, He revealeth Himself, and sealeth them for His own service.

2. By this wise and holy dealing with the hearers of the Gospel, whereby the Lord so makes good the covenant of Redemption, and bringeth His decrees to passe, as none shall have just reason to stumble; no wonder, that many be compassed within the draught-net of the Gospel, and be moved to enter into this holy and blessed covenant, of whom there may be elect, not as yet converted, whereupon by Gods appointment, followeth a solemn covenanting of all that consent to the condition of the covenant, and professe their faith in Christ: all whom (with their children) Christ translates from the Pagan world, into His visible kingdom and fellowship of His Church militant and grants unto them right to the common priviledges of Citizens, in the order appointed in His word, that keeping all lawfull and possible communion with the Catholick visible Church of Christ, they may be edified in their particular congregations, and governed with others by Ecclesiasticall disciplin,

3. Together

3. Together with these externall means, serving for drawing on the covenant and going on in it, the common operations of God do concur; common to all the called, both elect and reprobat, and gifts common to both, are bestowed, such as illumination, morall persuasion, historycall, dogmaticall and temporary faith, morall change of affections, and some sort of externall amendment of their outward conversation, *saving grace* being the speciall gift of God to His own.

4. Of this maner of covenanting and taking into Church-fellowship, all the called that consent in a morall way to the condition of the covenant, regenerat and unregenerat, we have a patern in the Lords covenanting with all *Israel*, *Exod.* 19. the covenant is offered to all the Israelites, without exception; all are invited to enter in covenant without exception, arguments, motives and morall inducements are made use of, from their experience of the Lords goodnesse and gifts given to them before; most ample promises of spirituall benefits, are made unto them, conditionally to be bestowed on them both in this life, and in the life to come, *vers.* 4. 5. 6. the people embrace the condition of the covenant, *v.* 7. 8. the people are sanctified, and prepared to receive the holy commands and will of God, in the rest of the chapter; then, in the 20. chapter and in the rest of the book, the duties of the covenanters are propounded, which concern the acknowledgement of sin and deserved death; and these also which concern obtaining of justification and sanctification by Christ, and which concern their shewing forth their thankfulnesse, all the dayes of their life.

The same covenant, after fourty years, is repeated and renewed by *Moses*, a little before his death in the land of Moab, *Deut.* 29. the Lord commands *Moses* to renew the covenant with all the people, *vers.* 1. all the people of Israel, are gathered together, regenerat and unregenerat, *vers.* 2. the sum of arguments and motives to enter in covenant of new, is shortly set down, *vers.* 3.

the

the greateſt part of the people to be joyned to God in covenant, are openly declared by *Moſes* to be unregenerat, *verſ.* 4.

After that, arguments are uſed to move them, in all time coming, to truſt in the Lord and to obey him, to *verſ.* 9. the covenant is made with the heads of the tribes, and elders of the people, and their governours, and with all the men of Iſrael, with their little ones, with the women, and with the ſtrangers that were in the midſt of their camp, *verſ.* 10. 11. the covenant is ſolemnized with adjuration of all to keep the conditions thereof, *verſ.* 12. 13. the covenant is extended with adjuration to the poſterity, *verſ.* 14. 15. neither is there any exception made, or excluſion of any that conſented to the covenant, whether unregenerat Iſraelites or ſtrangers, but all are admitted within this covenant.

The ſame way of covenanting did *John Baptiſt* follow, admitting to his baptiſm the ſeal of this covenant, all thoſe that came from *Jeruſalem* and out of all *Judea*, and from the borders of *Jordan*, without exception; whoſoever confeſſed their ſins, or that they were ſinners, and profeſſed they did receive the offer of grace, made in the Name of Chriſt Jeſus, the true lamb of God, that takes away the ſins of the world, *Matth.* 3. 5, 6. and ſo far was *John* from waiting for evidences of ſaving grace and regeneration, before he admitted them that came to his baptiſm, into the fellowſhip of the externall covenant of grace and reconciliation, that on the contrair, he made publick profeſſion, that the fan whereby the chaff is ſeparated from the wheat, and the hypocrit diſcerned from the ſincere Chriſtian, was not in his hand, or in any other man or mens hands, but in the hand of Chriſt Jeſus Himſelf only. And therefore (which is worthy to be obſerved) after he had publickly teſtified his ſuſpicion of the hypocriſie and old poyſonable diſpoſition, in the Phariſees and Sadducees that came to his baptiſm, and offered to receive the covenant of grace and the ſeal thereof, *verſ.* 7. forthwith,

with, without inquiring into their regeneration and sincerity of heart, he baptized them among the rest, v. 11. and left them to be examined thereafter by Christ Himself, whether they were upright in heart or not.

The same way of gathering members of the visible Christian Churches out of the world, did Christs own Apostles follow in His own company, Christ himself being present bodily, beholding and approving their baptizing of multitudes, who after hearing of Christs sermons, offered to receive baptism, and went down to the water *Arnon*, where Christs Apostles did make and baptize moe disciples then John, *Joh.* 4. 1. that is, they admitted multitudes into the holy covenant, and sealed the same with baptism, taking no stricter course of examination of them then John did, but admitting all that craved the benefit of the covenant and the seal of it, though they had no certain evidence of their regeneration, being satisfied, that Christ did not forbid to baptize them, when he saw them go down to the water to be baptized, after hearing His sermon. Now, there is no question He knew their hearts, all of them, and that many of them would afterward shortly make defection from Him, and depart from him, and from his disciples fellowship, as is plain, *Joh.* 6. 6, 66, 70.

This way of receiving into externall covenant, all these who receive the offer and the condition of the covenant, without inquiring into their election or reprobation, their regeneration or unregeneration for the time, (which may be called a covenanting outwardly and in the letter) in the deep and wise counsell of God, is appointed for the gathering and constitution of the visible kirk: for, by this mean, first, God so executeth and perfecteth the decree of election, that in the mean time he hindereth none, of all the hearers of the Gospel from receiving the grace of Christ offered therein. He excludeth no man from embraceing the covenant; but, on the contrair, he opens the door to all that are called, to enter into (as it were) the outer court of his dwelling

ling houſe, that they may ſo draw more near to him; and ſo he doth not *particularly* manifeſt any mans reprobation.

Secondly, by this means alſo he hideth the election of the elect from others, and from themſelves till they repent their ſins and flee to Chriſt, and bring forth ſome evidences of their election, in their obedience of faith and begun ſanctification.

Thirdly, the Lord makes uſe of this outward and common covenanting with all receivers of the offer, as a mean to draw the confederat in the letter, to be confederat in the ſpirit; for, the faith which he requires as the condition of the covenant, he worketh in the elect, if not before, or with the externall covenanting, yet undoubtedly after, in a time acceptable, and that by the ordinary means, the uſe whereof is granted to all confederat externally: and ſo as common illumination is a mean to that ſpeciall, ſpirituall and ſaving illumination; and dogmaticall or hiſtoricall faith, is a mean unto ſaving faith; and externall calling, is a mean to effectuall calling, So externall covenanting in the letter, is a mean moſt fit, and accommodat to make a man a covenanter in the ſpirit.

Fourthly, this externall covenanting, wherein God promiſeth to be the believers God, and the God of their children, is a mean not only to beget and foſter faith in the covenanting parents, for their own ſalvation, but alſo a mean to comfort them about the ſalvation of their infants, dying in their infancy, whether before or after their baptiſm; and a mean to give them good hope of thoſe childrens bleſſed reſurrection, by vertue of the promiſe, becauſe in covenanting, the Lord doth promiſe to be the believers God, and the God of his children, and doth not exact the condition of actuall faith from their dying infants.

From theſe grounds, it followeth, firſt, that ſome are taken externally and conditionally into the covenant, upon their ingagement unto the righteouſneſſe of faith,

and

and their baptiſm is a ſeal of their ingagement unto it, who albeit they be not as yet regenerat, yet they are to be eſteemed members of the Church, and Chriſtians outwardly, Chriſtians by calling, and in the letter, whoſe praiſe is of men, as they were alſo in the Church before Chriſts coming, Jews outwardly and in the letter, whoſe praiſe was of men, commended indeed for ſo much: but if they came not up to lay hold upon, and follow after, righteouſneſſe by faith, were not Jews in Gods account, and unto them circumciſion was but in the letter, and the ſealing of the *engagement* only, and not of the good things covenanted, *Rom.* 2. 28, 29.

Secondly, it followeth, that there are ſome covenanters outwardly and inwardly alſo, in the fleſh and in the ſpirit alſo, whoſe praiſe is not of men only, but of God alſo, to wit, ſuch as not only have engaged to fulfill the condition of living in the faith, and following after the righteouſneſſe of faith, but are performers really of their engagement, and unto thoſe their baptiſm, is not only outward and in the fleſh, but inward alſo, in the ſpirit alſo, approven of God alſo. Such as were in the viſible Church of old, Jews inwardly, performers of their ingagement to live by faith, Jews in the ſpirit and not in the letter only, whoſe praiſe was of God, and not of men only, *Rom.* 2. 28, 29.

Thirdly, it followeth, that ſome are in the covenant abſolutely, or without condition required of them for their part, whom God taketh in his own hand abſolutly, ſuch as are elect infants, dying in their infancy, for whom, that they might be delivered from originall ſin and deſerved wrath, Chriſt hath ingaged and laid down his life, and promiſed in the covenant to be their God; whom therefore ere they die, he doth immediatly quicken, and ſanctifie, and tranſlateth to heaven after death; *of ſuch* (ſaith Chriſt) *is the Kingdom of heaven*, *Mark*, 10. 14.

How the externall dispensation of the Covenant of old, differeth from that which now is under the Gospel.

ALbeit the covenant of grace in it self, be one and the same, from the first preaching of it in Paradise, unto the end of the world, because Christ the Saviour of his people, is one and the same, yesterday and to day and for ever, and because the faith of the elect is of one kind, and was and shall be to the worlds end; yet, the external outletting and dispensation of the covenant differeth, as it was propounded before Christs incarnation and after it: for, in Paradise this covenant was set forth by way of promise, (according to the articles of the covenant of Redemption) that Christ should assume the seed of the woman, and should suffer in the flesh, or humane nature, and by his power destroy the works of the devil, in favours of his own chosen people, which should militat against the devil under his banner.

2. And least any man should fancy, that the covenant of grace, founded upon this promise, was made with all the posterity of *Adam*, as the covenant of works was made with *Adam* and all his posterity. the Lord, in the uttering of the promise, did not direct his speech unto *Adam* and *Evah*, but to the devil by way of threatning, and cursing him and his seed, even all the reprobat, in the audience of *Adam* and *Evah*, that our first parents over-hearing the curse of the serpent and his seed, and the promise of Christs incarnation, in laying hold upon the promiser by faith, might be justified and saved as privat persons, after the same way as other believers after them should be justified and saved. This their faith in Christ, the Lord did foster and augment by his doctrine taught unto them, and by the prescribing typicall sacrifices to be offered in faith to God for remission of sins: And the Lord did admit their children into the externall fellowship of this covenant, without putting difference between one and another outwardly, as we see in *Cain* and *Abel*: of which two,

the one, to wit, *Cain*, was a covenanter in the flesh outwardly and in the letter only; for he was destitute and void of saving faith; the other, to wit, *Abel*, was both outwardly and inwardly a covenanter, not in the letter only, but in the spirit also, indued with lively, justifying and saving faith in Christ to be incarnat, and to die for his own people, as the Apostle testifieth, reckoning him up among believers justified by faith, *Heb.* 11. 4.

3. After the flood, God did not make the covenant with every man, nor with any family by way of explicit and formall paction, except *Abraham* and his family only, of whom the Messiah, God the Mediatour, was to come according to the flesh; and with him the Lord confirmed the covenant, by adding unto it the Sacrament of circumcision, as the seal of righteousnesse and justification by faith.

4. In the wilderneſſe at mount Sinai, that the Lord might make evident the necessity of justification by faith in Christ to come, he did repeat the law of works; and to them that did acknowledge their sin he did set forth Christ their deliverer, under the vail of sacrifices and leviticall types, and the very same is the covenant now, whereunto Christ and his ministers, laying aside the vail of the ceremonies, did openly invite their hearers, that acknowledging their sins, and renouncing confidence in their own power and worth, they should cast themselves into the arms of Christ the Saviour, that through him they might obtain justification and life eternall. We see here indeed a diverse maner of dispensing, and outward managing the making of the covenant with men, but the covenant was still the same, clothed and set forth in a diverse maner, and did no other wayes differ then and now, but as one and the self same man differeth from himself, cloathed suitably one way in his minority, and another way in his riper age.

5. If the covenanters therefore be compared among themselves in respect of diverse dispensations, the covenanters

nanters in spirit after Christs incarnation, are in a better condition, then the believers before Christs coming; for, the believers before Christ incarnat under the pedagogie of the law, did lye under a servitude and bondage as to the outward man, for then the sons and heirs not come to age, did differ nothing from servants; *Gal.* 4. 1. and in regard of the inward man, they saw the mystery of salvation, albeit savingly, yet more obscurely, for, through the vail they saw the mystery of salvation to be had by Christ; but after Christs coming, the Lord dealt more liberally with believers, because by their freedom from the leviticall ceremonies, taking away the vail, they may behold with open face the glory of the Lord, as in a mirror, and be transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18.

6. But as for what concerns the covenanters in the letter and outwardly only; they are in worse condition after the coming of Christ, then the literall covenanters before his incarnation: for, the unregenerat under the Gospel, are in danger of more heavy judgement, then the uncircumcised in heart were before Christ came, in regard it is a greater sin to neglect and despise Christ speaking from heaven, in the more clear manifestation of himself in the Gospel, then it was before Christ came to contemn the darker doctrine of *Moses*, *Heb.* 2, 3. and 10. 20.

Concerning the condition of the Covenant.

IN receiving or admission of persons, who are come to the use of reason into the covenant, these three things are to be observed, and distinguished one from another; first, the condition of the person, desireing to be in covenant with God, for reconciliation and grace through Christ; 2. The condition upon which he is entered in covenant; 3. The condition required of him, for evidencing of his sincere covenanting.

The first condition required of the man who desireth

to enter in the covenant of reconciliation, is the acknowledgement of his sins; for, except a man confesse himself a sinner, and unable to help himself, Christ rejecteth him, and will have nothing to do with him; for Christ hath said, *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*, Matth. 9. 13.

As for the next, the condition of the covenant upon which the man is received, and whereby the man becometh a confederat, it is his consent to receive the grace offered, even Christ with his benefits, as he is holden forth in the Gospel; or, the condition of the covenant is faith, receiving Christ for righteousnesse and eternall life.

As for the third, the condition required of the man now entered in the covenant, for evidenceing the truth and sincerity of the faith which the covenanter professeth, it is the taking on him the yoke of Christ, which he layeth on his confederat people; or, this condition, is the covenanters up-giving of himself to Christs government, and obedience of his commands: and all these three, are expressed by Christ, *Matth.* 11. 28. 29.

First, they that labour, and are heavy laden, are they whom Christ calleth unto a covenant and fellowship of his grace.

Secondly, he propounds the condition of the covenant, to wit, that they believe in Christ, or *come unto Him*, that in him they may find full relief from sin and misery, and in him full righteousnesse and felicity.

Thirdly, he requires of them who do embrace him by faith, and so have accepted the condition of the covenant, that they give evidence of their faith in him, by taking on of his yoke on them; *take my yoke upon you*, saith he.

All these three, a covenanter in the letter externally, will professe to have, and to purpose to follow; but the true covenanters in spirit, have indeed all the three: for, true faith in Christ, or the receiving of Christ offered in the Evangell for justification and salvation, which is the

the condition of the covenant, presupposeth the condition of the man who is called to imbrace Christ, and draweth after it the condition required of the man covenanting: for, he that receiveth Christ for righteousnesse and eternall life, of necessity must acknowledge himself a man in himself unrighteous, and a lost man, and that he cometh to Christ to be justified, and sanctified and saved by him, and so to persevere in this course unto life eternall.

Of the tearms whereupon this Covenant is offered and pressed in Scripture.

THe terms of the covenant, are diversly propounded in Scripture, *Exod.* 19. 5. the Lord propounds it thus, *if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar people unto me,* &c.

In these words, the condition required of those that are already entered in covenant is most eminent; for, this people was in covenant from the time of *Abrahams* covenanting, and was admitted to the Sacraments before their coming forth of Egypt; and therefore the conditions previous to their entering in covenant, and required for closing the bargain, are not so much insisted on at this time. This condition the people do accept, and give answer to God by Moses, *vers.* 8. *all that the Lord hath spoken we will do.*

Another form and expression, is used, *Acts* 16. 31. *Paul* and *Silas* say to the Jailour, now anxious how to be saved, *believe in the Lord, and thou shalt be saved; thou and all thy house.* The Jailour accepts of the condition, and he is baptized and all his house, *vers.* 33.

The condition of his person taking with guiltinesse, and granting his lost conditon is spoken of, *vers.* 37. the condition of the covenant therefore is propounded in the next room, and is accepted, where-upon baptism is administred unto him.

Psal. 27. 8. In other words the same condition is propounded: the Lord craveth faith, seeking communi-

on with God for the condition, *seek ye my face*; the Psalmist accepteth the condition and answereth, *Thy Face, O Lord, will I seek.*

Isa. 45. 22. Christ requires faith in these he calleth, and upon that condition promiseth salvation, *Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved*: the answer of the believer is set down, *vers.* 24. *Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousnesse and strength.*

Likewise the way of making this covenant, is set forth by Christ, offering himself a Saviour on the one part, and the believers receiving Christ on the other part, *Joh.* 1. 11, 12. *as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name.*

And, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19, 20. upon this only condition of consenting to reconciliation offered, he summeth up most shortly and clearly the covenant-making, *We are ambassadours for Christ, as if God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead, be reconciled to God.* There remaineth no more for making of the covenant, but that the hearer do honestly answer, thus, *the offer and condition pleaseth me well, I consent to be reconciled.* Now he who consenteth to be reconciled, 1. Granteth his naturall enimity; 2. Accepteth Christ the Mediatour, Redeemer, Reconciler, offered to him by God, whose fulnesse is in Christ; And, 3. obliedgeth himself to entertain this friendship all his life after.

Last of all, the making of the covenant, is sometime pressed to be received and followed under the form of a precept, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. *this is his command, that ye believe in the Name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another as he hath commanded us*: In which words the condition, or estate of the person, who is called to believe and enter in covenant, is presupposed: for, it is imported, that he must acknowledge, not only that he is a miserable sinner, and unable to relieve himself, but also that he is naturally averse from the way of seeking righteousnesse by faith in Christ, and hath need that the soveraign

power of God draw him to Christ. Secondly, the condition of the making of covenant is propounded, which is to believe in Jesus Christ. In the third room, the condition required of him that is entered in covenant, by believing in Christ, is, *that we love one another as he hath commanded us.*

This offered and commanded condition of the covenant of grace, some by the grace of God do accept, and engage to perform, and do perform sincerely, albeit weakly; other some, trusting in their own strength, engage unto the obedience of faith, and with their mouth professe they are sinners, and do believe in Christ, and that they will submit themselves to his Government, drawing near to him with their lips, when their hearts are far from him; and such mens faith, changeth not their old disposition and way of living, but it suffereth them to serve their belly, or mammon, or vain glory, and such other idols; yet because the Church are not judges of the secrets of the heart, they must receive into Church-fellowship, all who confesse themselves to be sinners, and professe they do accept the offer of Christs grace, and promise subjection to his ordinances.

Obj. But how can the Church receive men in Church-fellowship, who are destitute of lively faith?

Ans. The Church is not judge of the heart, or of the secrets thereof, because it cannot see faith in it self, but must look to the profession of faith, and to the fruits thereof in the own order and time; the Church is witnesse to their engagement, but not judges of their sincerity.

2. The covenant of grace doth not exclude the most vile sinners, if they acknowledge their sinfulnesse, and do solemnly consent unto the condition of the covenant: because, according to this covenant nothing is bestowed on the covenanter, of merit, but of grace only, which the Church knoweth God can give, and sometimes doth give unto counterfit confederats, making them sincere in his own time, and that by the means of the ordi-

nances, made use of in the visible Church.

3. It is one thing to be a confederat Christian in the letter, externally in the sight of men; another thing to be a covenanter in the spirit, inwardly in respect of the heart and inward man, *Rom.* 2. 28. and albeit the externall covenant doth not bring on righteousnesse and life, except a man be also a covenanter inwardly in his heart, in the sense of sin and imperfection, making daily use of Christ: yet it is certain, that outward covenanting, is an ordinary and blessed mean unto many, to beget and foster faith, and help forth the fruits thereof.

4. It may and should suffice us, that God, in the first framing of a nationall Church, did admit, and commanded *Moses* to admit all the Israelites in covenant, of whom very few were converted, or reconciled to God in their spirit; and this was not hid from *Moses*, or from the truly godly in the camp of Israel, as is plainly shewen to us, *Deut.* 28. 29. where God bears witnesse against the people, that their heart was not according to their profession and engagement: and *Moses* speaketh out this truth in all the peoples audience, while he is renewing the covenant with them, notwithstanding they were unregenerat, *Deut.* 29.

Obj. But some will insist and tell us, that the visible Church is a society of Saints or regenerat persons, and that they who live in the visible Church, must be visible Saints, whose life at least doth not contradict their profession, and such as by the judgement of charity we must esteem regenerat.

Ans. Christs visible Church, is the company of them that are called out of the world unto him; the company of them that are consecrat to God, and engaged by solemn covenant to follow the course of holinesse: By calling they are Saints, albeit many of them may be found polluted in their maners: thus doth God Himself teach us to judge, *Psal.* 50. 5. *Gather unto me my saints*, saith He, and who are these? *These who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.* Now, of these, many did

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not worship God in spirit, but placed all their religion in ceremonies, and went about by their outward sacrifices to pacifie God, and to expiat their sins, as is plain, *vers.* 7, 8. others of these *called saints*, consecrat unto God, and joyned with him in a visible covenant, were very wicked, who no wayes behaved themselves as became covenanters with God; and who therefore were to be excluded from the benefit of the covenant, except they repented: for, they hated true holinesse, and did cast the commands behind their back, *vers.* 16. were thieves and adulterers, slanderers and calumniatours of their brethren, *vers.* 18, 19. and yet for all this, the Lord doth not exclude them out of the visible Church, but doth in a fatherly maner reprove them, that they might repent and not perish.

2. There is no question, whether all in the visible Church ought to be both in open conversation, and in heart holy, and that they shall certainly be damned and perish, that are not such? but the question is here, about the duty of the Governours of the Church, and of the godly in it, whether they should exclude from Church-membership all who are not regenerat, at least so to be esteemed in the judgement of charity? or, whether all are to be holden for Church-members, and keeped within the Church, who are in covenant with God, and sealed with the seal thereof, to the intent that by doctrine and censures of the Church (so far as may be by means) they may be regenerat, and being regenerat, be helped on in the way of holinesse?

3. There is a difference to be put betwixt the precepts, concerning the personall sanctification of every man in himself, and the precepts given for the governing of others, and keeping holy society with the *called saints*, renewed or unrenewed in the visible Church, so far as Gods word giveth light and order: for, it is commanded to me and thee, that we pursue peace and holiness, without which none shall see the face of God; but it is not commanded to me or thee, that we should keep

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no Church-fellowſhip in God's ordinances, except with the regenerat. It is not commanded to the Governours of the Church, that they muſt examine every perſon concerning their regeneration; neither are they forbidden to admit any into the ſociety of the Church, ſave theſe whom they eſteem regenerat: But they are commanded to bring in to the Church, all that oblige themſelves to be Chriſts diſciples, with their children, and by the means appointed of God, in doctrine and cenſures of the Church, to promove their ſanctification and ſalvation; for, ſo many doth Chriſts commiſſion to the Paſtors of the Church import, *Matth.* 28. 19,20.

4. Regeneration is not the juſt meaſure, whereby to ſquare the dimenſions and extent of the viſible Church; but, *confederation* and obſignation of the Covenant by baptiſme: For, the Church is Chriſts viſible kingdom, whoſe viſible ſubjects are all they who ſolemnly are ingaged to ſubject themſelves to his doctrine and government; and therefore the Church viſible, is not to be defined, the company of the regenerat, but the company of the confederat with God, and called unto holineſs; among whom, Chriſt tells us, there are few elect, and ſo fewer regenerat; and therefore the Church of Chriſt, is compared to a barn-floor, whereinto is gathered both the chaff and the wheat, both they that have faith and they that profeſs faith, out of whom Chriſt doth gather his own Elect and redeemed ones.

Obj. But at leaſt in gathering of a Church out of the world, reſpect muſt be had, that the conſenting of the covenanter be ſerious; and how can the conſent be ſerious, where the heart is not ſincere, where the perſon is not regenerat? Such a mans conſent to the covenant, as is without ſaving faith, is but fained, counterfeit, hypocritical, and ſuch a conſent as may hinder the mans regeneration, and do nothing but provoke Gods wrath againſt the man and the receivers or admitters of him alſo.

Anſ.

Anſ. *Serious* is ſometime oppoſed to ſport or play, and ſo a mater may be ſerious which is in earneſt gone about, and is not openly hiſtrionical. And ſometime, *ſerious* is oppoſed to the intention of fraud and deceit; and ſo that may be called *ſerious*, which is done without a purpoſe to deceive or beguile the party. But when the conſenter to ingage in covenant, ſpeaketh as he thinketh, albeit poſſibly his own heart deceive him, his conſent to the condition of the covenant may juſtly be called *ſerious*, becauſe he intends to deal in earneſt, as in a weighty buſineſs. And ſuch was the conſent of the people of *Iſrael* unto the covenant made with God, *Exod.* 19.

Likewiſe, *counterfeit* and *hypocritical*, is ſometime called ſo, in oppoſition to that which is reall, true and ſpiritual: And ſo all conſent to the covenant of Grace, which doth not proceed from the ſpirit of Regeneration is but fained faith, and indeed is not ſaving faith; yet, it may be *ſerious* and morally honeſt, like Iſraels, *Exod.* 14. 20. and ſo ſufficient to make a covenant, and to tye an obligation on the man to ſuch duties as may lead to ſalvation.

Again, *fained*, conntrfeit, hypocritical, is called that which a man purpoſely doth fain, making ſhew of that which he knows not to be, being conſcious to his own wickedneſs; and ſuch a fained conſent, we grant, doth provoke God againſt ſuch a perſon; but the Church is not judge of this, ſo long as they know not of this groſs hypocriſie.

We hold then, that there may be, and uſually fall forth, ſuch a morall conſent unto the covenant of Grace without ſaving faith, which may be called a *ſerious*, really honeſt conſent, as to the agreement of the mind and mouth of the covenanter, ſuch as is found in ordinary civil contracts, between one man and another, and muſt be acknowledged to be an external Church-covenanting with God, and with the reſt of the members of the Church; and ſo the conſent,

ſent in reſpect to the making a covenant, is not ſained, neither is it diſpleaſing unto God in the own kind, albeit it be not ſufficient or acceptable to God unto the perſons ſalvation: For, ſo much doth God himſelf teſtifie (*Deut.* 5.) ſpeaking of the Iſraelits (who were ignorant of the deceitfulneſs of their own heart, and of their inability to perform what they promiſed) he ſaith, (*ver.* 28,29.) *They have well ſaid, all that they have ſpoken.* Therefore unto the tying a man in this bond of the covenant, this morall honeſty, is ſufficient, albeit to ſalvation it is not ſufficient, but in order thereto a mean of God's appointment.

Now, that there is ſuch a thing as we call morall integrity or honeſty, which differeth from the true Chriſtians ſpiritual honeſty, or ſincerity, it is plain from theſe places of Scripture, which ſpeak of this integrity of heart in ſuch perſons as were not renewed, becauſe they intended no other thing then they pretended. Thus *Abimelech* excuſeth himſelf to God when he took away *Sarah*, *Abrahams* wife from him, thinking *Sarah* had been his ſiſter and not his wife, *Gen.* 20. 6. *In the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands, have I done this.* And this the Lord doth acknowledge to be true, *ver.* 17. So alſo the captains that came with their companies to *David* in *Ziklag*, are ſaid to have a perfect heart, becauſe they were morally honeſt, and reſolved, as they profeſſed, uprightly to make *David* King, and to help him in the war, and not betray him, 1 *Chron.* 12. 33. 38.

Of the ſundry wayes of mens framing of the covenant of Grace.

AS we told there was a covenant of works, one truly ſo called of Gods inſtitution; and another falſe ſort of covenant of works, of mans framing: So it is alſo in the mater of the covenant of Grace, there is one truly ſo called, and another ſort falſe and counterfeit of mans framing. That which is of Gods framing

ming, is the covenant, that God makes with the Church, for giving righteousnes and life by faith in Jesus Christ: that which we call a counterfeit covenant, is the covenant, which men frame unto themselves upon any other condition then faith: Such was the counterfeit covenant of the false apostles, who corrupted the Gospel-covenant among the *Galatians*, whereof the Apostle *Paul* complaineth, *Gal.* 1. 6, 7. challenging them, that they had forsaken God, who called them to the grace of Christ, and were turned over to another Gospel, that is, to another covenant of grace, then the true one, which is only one, and not various, but by the troublers of the Church was changed into another frame; for, the true covenant, was perverted and corrupted by these who went about to joyn together Justification by works, and Justification by grace through faith in Christ: which two sorts of covenant, are inconsistent, and do mutually overthrow one another; So also did the Pharisee (*Luke*, 18. 11, 12.) corrupt and pervert both the covenant of works and the covenant of grace; he corrupted and perverted the covenant of works, because he put up to God some external good works for the perfect obedience of the law; and he perverted the covenant of grace, because albeit he did acknowledge the grace of God, and gave him thanks for giving him ability and power to do good works, and for infusing habits of piety and justice in him; yet, he exalted himself, and took the thanks and praise to himself who had made good use of these vertuous habits, *God, I thank thee,* (saith he) *that I am not like other men*, &c.

2. Like unto this fault, is the errour of many, of whom some makes the *act of faith* brought forth by the power of *natural free-will*, to be the condition of the covenant, contrary to the doctrine of the Gospel, which makes faith infused, to be the gift of God, renouncing its own righteousnes and the merit of all works also, and resting on Christ, to be the condition:

on: For, the ſentence of the Apoſtle, ſtandeth firm and unmovable, *Rom.* 11.16. *If it be by grace, it is no more of works*, &c.

Other ſome make this the condition of the covenant, that Chriſt ſhould pay for mortal ſins by his own temporal ſufferings, and ſo take away everlaſting puniſhment, but will have the ſinner himſelf to pay for veniall ſins by temporal ſufferings, partly in this life and partly in purgatory.

Other ſome dream of framing the covenant of grace thus, if a man do all the good he is able, and hath a will to ſerve God better then before, they conceive, that God muſt take the will for the perfect deed, and ſo for good payment.

Which counterfeit conditions, and other ſuch like inventions of ſelf-pleaſing conceits, are all of them nothing elſe but the adulterating both of the covenant of works, and of the covenant of grace appointed of God, by which inventions men deceive themſelves to their own perdition.

Now, that ſuch perverting of the covenant of works and of grace, are rife & frequent among men, experience may prove: For, before Chriſts coming, this was the way of carnal Iſraelits, *Rom.* 10. 3. and *Rom.* 9. 30. For *they being ignorant of the righteouſneſs of God, went about to eſtabliſh their own inherent righteouſneſs, and would not ſubject themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God.* And of the *Galatians*, it is ſaid, *chap.* 5. 4. *Chriſt is become of none effect unto you, whoſoever of you are juſtified by the Law, ye are fallen from grace*; that is, ye who ſeek righteouſneſs or juſtification by works, have renounced ſo far as in you lyeth grace to be had by Chriſt; and experience daily ſheweth the ſame diſpoſition in many profeſſed Chriſtians.

Queſt. Are not then ſuch corrupters of the covenant of grace looſed from their obligation, wherein by their baptiſm they were tyed to ſeek righteouſneſs by faith only?

Anſ.

Anſ. No: for, albeit by ſo doing they prove themſelves to be corrupters and falſifiers of their covenant, to their own perdition, if they repent not; yet they ſtand obliged ſtill before God to their covenant ſealed in baptiſm: For, the covenant of God with man, cannot be diſſolved by mens treachery, and without Gods conſent, not only becauſe the covenant of God, with men, in regard of the perpetual equity thereof, hath in it a perpetual obligation, but alſo becauſe the ſoveraign dominion of God, hath the force of a law to oblige them whom God hath taken in among his people, that being once his confederat ſubjects, they ſhould remain ſtill his ſubjects: For, as circumciſion was a ſeal of covenanted righteouſneſs by faith, So baptiſm is a ſeal of the ſame covenanted righteouſneſs by faith, whether the covenanters remain conſtant unto their covenant or not, as we ſee in the Iſraelits, who albeit they were polluted with idolatry in *Egypt*, and albeit they proved rebellious in the wilderneſs, and in the land of promiſe were found often guilty of breach of covenant; yet, ſtill in the Scripture they are called God's people, and the Lords intereſt and right in them, ſtood faſt, and their right alſo unto the external priviledges of the citizens of God's kingdom, remained faſt alſo, untill the time that for their open and obſtinat rejecting of Chriſt, the children of the kingdom were caſt out and were broken off the true olive tree: So alſo, the obligation of the baptized, who turn the true covenant of grace in another of their own framing, doth ſtill ſtand, tying them to perform the condition of the true covenant; and their right to the external priviledges of the confederat, doth remain ſtill in ſome ſort, even when they are inter-dyted from the honourable poſſeſſion thereof by excommunication: For, the Apoſtle teacheth us, that the excommunicat remain, as to their eccleſiaſtick *ſtate*, (albeit not as to their preſent eccleſiaſtick condition) citizens and members of the Church, and ſubject

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to Jurisdiction ecclesiastick, and to Christs discipline; because when they are judged, and are under censure, they are said to be within the Kirk, and not without it, 1 Cor. 5. 12. *What have I to do to judge also them that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?* And these that were delivered unto Sathan, as to their present external condition, remained notwithstanding, as to their external state, the domesticks of God, under the discipline of God's house, and were pressed by the censure laid on them, to learn to cease from their sinfull course, and specially from these faults for which they were censured and corrected by their excommunication, 1 *Tim.* 1. 20. Hymeneus *and* Alexander *were given over to Sathan, that they might learn not to blaspheme*; that is, that being humbled and brought to repentance they might return to the acknowledgement of the truth and to a reverent speaking of holy things, and so the right to be counted brethren and members of the Church (albeit under censure, restraint and dis-respect till they repented) was not taken altogether from them, even under excommunication; not yet were the private duties of charity due to brethren in that fearfull condition, to be altogether denied unto them, even when the possession of the former honour of blamelesse brethren, was taken from them, and for, the Apostle will have them, albeit excommunicat, to be esteemed still censured brethren, and not looked upon as enemies, 2 *Thess.* 3. 14. 15. *If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man* (to amend by putting the censure of excommunication on him) *and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed, yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother*; and this is so much the more carefully to be observed, that the constitution of the visible Church of such and such members, and the use of excommunication may be the better understood: least the excommunicat, being over-burdened by the sharpness of the censure, should seem to themselves altogether excluded from

from Church-society, and so despair of returning to the full possession of their priviledges, but might know, that the right of citizens of the city of God, was reserved unto them, and was to be restored by way of possession after their repentance, and that they were not cut off from the Christian charity of the brethren, no not when they were lying under the sentence, that they might so much the sooner return to repentance and to the possession of their Ecclesiastick honour.

Obj. But here there ariseth a greater doubt and objection, how, and upon what reason God doth require the condition of faith, which men cannot perform, except it be given of God, as the Apostle testifieth, *Ephes.* 2. 8. *you are saved of grace by faith, and that not of your selves, it is the gift of God?*

Ans. The equity of the duty required, doth not depend upon mens present power or strength, of whom the condition is required, but upon this ground, that ability was given to *Adam*, and to his posterity in him: for, all injoyned service, and so the duty of believing in Christ, is founded upon mans naturall obligation to obey the morall law; for, by vertue of the first command, *Adam* was bound, and we in him, not only to believe the word of God already revealed unto him, but to believe also every word of God to be revealed, and he was bound to give unto God the glory of all his attributes, not only of these which already did shew forth themselves in his works, but also of these attributes, which as yet did not put forth themselves in actuall exercise: for as it cannot be denied, that man was bound to give God the glory of his avenging justice, upon his threatning to inflict the punishment of death in case man should sin, albeit he could not see the execution of it before he fell; So also it is manifest, he was bound to give God the glory of his goodnesse and mercy, albeit no object of shewing mercy was yet to be found: and that partly, because it was his duty to give the glory of all perfections unto God, whereof *mercy* is

one; and partly, upon the experience he had of Gods manifested goodnesse in his creation, and Gods making a covenant with him about eternall life, upon so easie and equitable tearms: upon the same ground, even after the fall, *Adam* was bound not to despair, nor flye, nor hide himself from God, from whom it was impossible he could escape.

It cannot then be reasonably denied, but man by the law of nature, is bound to give credit to God when he speaketh, and bound to trust in God when He offereth himself as a friend and a father to him, and when God bids him seek his face, he is bound to obey him, and seek his face, and to follow after more and more near communion with him.

It is true indeed, that *Adam* in his integrity, could not formally and actually believe in God as a Redeemer: partly, because this mystery was not yet revealed; partly, because he, not having yet sinned, had not need of a Redeemer or of remission of sin; but yet, the power and ability of believing in God, according as God should let forth his will, and the power to adhere unto God, and rest on his goodnesse and good-will, was given to man in his creation: for, this perfection was a part of the image of God, wherein man was created, even as the habit of shewing mercy on the miserable (though such an object was not to be found, while man continued in the state of innocency) was a part of that original holinesse in him; and if this ground hold not, sinners by their sinning once, should make themselves free to sin for ever after, and exempt themselves from all the duties of the morall law, upon this pretence, that they were unable to give obedience to it, which is most unreasonable. And, 2. Because the hearers of the Gospel esteem themselves able to perform the condition of the covenant of grace offered, and to believe in Christ, yea and to give credit, or not, to what is preached unto them, as they see reason; is it not equitable then to put all men to it, who judge themselves

ſelves able to perform what is required; to the end that after experience, and tryall taken of themſelves, they ſhould either acknowledge their naturall inability to believe in Chriſt, and ſo go ſeek of God the gift of faith, or elſe be deſtitute of all excuſe, if they ſhall not do what they conceive and profeſſe themſelves able to do?

Thirdly, it is equitable to crave faith from them who are able to promiſe morally the obedience of faith, and are able to uſe the externall means leading unto true faith; for, the Lord Himſelf followed this way in his covenanting with the Iſraelites, *Exod.* 19. where the Lord propounds the condition of the covenant, and promiſeth to be their God, if they ſhould hearken to His voice, *verſ.* 5. 6. the people did accept the condition, and undertook to perform it, *verſ.* 7. 8. and upon theſe tearms the covenant was made with them morally, in an externall way, which did bind the obligation faſt upon them.

Fourthly, by preaching of the covenant of grace, God doth ordinarly beſtow grace, and grace for grace, on the redeemed in a time acceptable; and in craving the condition, the Lord giveth grace to accept the condition, and to perform it; and this courſe is very ſutable to Gods ſoveraignty or ſupremacy, ſutable to His wiſdom and his juſtice, and ſutable to the freedom of his grace: for, it becometh the abſolute ſupremacy of God, and the liberty of His moſt holy will, to ſend the Goſpel only to whom He will; it becometh his wiſdom, where ever He doth ſend the Goſpel, to make offer of grace indifferently to all the hearers, whether elect or reprobat, that all may be tryed, whether they pleaſe to receive the offer or not; It becometh his juſtice to withhold grace from ſuch as refuſe the offer of it; and it becometh his wiſdom, mercy, grace, truth and juſtice, both to exact from the elect, for whom Chriſt did ſatisfie, the performance of the condition of the covenant, and in the mean time, by the offer of grace, to make them favingly to believe, uſing the command of

believing in Christ for a fit mean to beget faith: hence it is, that saving faith is given only to the elect; which faith therefore, is called the *faith of the elect*, *Tit.* 1. 1. Hence it is, that the elect are called *heirs of the promises*, *Gal.* 3. 29. and *children of the promise*, Heb. 6. 17. partly, because they are the children promised to be brought in to Christ, *Isa.* 53. 10. partly, because by the promises they are regenerat to a new life, and by believing in Christ, they obtain righteousnesse and eternall life: for, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. they are called *begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of the incorruptible seed of the word of God.*

Quest. If it be asked, since faith is so necessary, what is the object of faith?

Ans. We answer, the truth of God revealed in Scripture, or God speaking in Scripture, and promising eternall life upon conditions holden forth in these promises: among these promises, some pertain to the covenant of works, such as, *Gal.* 3. 12. *do this and live*: and, Matth. 19. 17. *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*; and sundry other particular promises of blessings, both spirituall and temporall annexed unto the promulgation of the Law; which promises do serve to encourage them to make good their undertaking if they be able, as they conceive they are, and to humble them when they shall find by experience, that neither threatning nor promises can make them to fulfill that law. Beside the promises annexed to the covenant of works, there are other promises, which pertain to the covenant of reconciliation, and tend to the making men embrace the covenant of grace, and to continue therein, such as these which are propounded in the Gospel, for giving unto the believer all the sure mercies of *David*, and the benefits purchased by Christ. And of this sort, some are more generall, some more speciall. some of them belong to this life, some of them to the life to come: for, true godlynesse comprehending faith and the fruits of it, hath the promises both of this life, and of the life to come: of all these promises, the foundation

foundation and fountain is the covenant of Redemption (whereof we have ſpoken, *Chap.* 4.) wherein Chriſt promiſeth to the Father to do his will, and the Father promiſeth to Chriſt as Mediatour and head of the Church, in favours of the redeemed, that he ſhall ſee his ſeed and be ſatisfied, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand: upon this covenant of Redemption, all the promiſes, made to the Church, do depend, whether they be abſolute promiſes, whether conditional promiſes, whether qualified promiſes, which are like unto conditionall. Abſolute promiſes we call (for example) ſuch as do promiſe abſolutely the taking away the heart of ſtone and the converſion of the Elect, and their perſeverance and ſalvation, *Jer.* 31. 31, 32. *&c.* and 32. *ver.* 40. Such are the promiſes of gathering, edifying propagating and perpetuating of the Chriſtian Church to the worlds end, as *Math.* 16. 18. *Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* Which ſort of promiſes, do ſerve to move men to come and embrace Chriſt; and after men have fled to Chriſt, in whom all the promiſes are Yea and Amen, the believer may make application and comfortable uſe of all the precious promiſes of righteouſneſs and eternal life, ſet forth in the Goſpel. Conditionall promiſes are ſuch, as make offer of Chriſt and reconciliation to the hearers of the Goſpel, upon this condition, that in the ſenſe of ſin and fear of wrath, they flye to Chriſt as the only and ſufficient remedy of ſin and miſery. Qualified promiſes like unto conditionall, are theſe that have in them ſome qualification of the perſon who is already a believer, and do ſeem to make that qualification or deſignation of the believer to be a condition of the bleſſing promiſed therein: which promiſes, if they be well conſidered do pre-ſuppone the qualified perſon, to whom the promiſe is made, to be both a believer and alſo to be evidently endued with the named quality; as for example, *Math.* 5. Bleſſed are

the merciſull, the peace-maker, the meek, the mourners, the poor, the ſufferer of perſecution for the Goſpel, or for Chriſt, &c. which vertues, if the perſon be not a believer in Chriſt, do as yet ſignifie nothing in him, nor do not intitle the man to this Goſpel-bleſſedneſs; and being the deſignations of believers, they give the perſons endued therewith, encouragment to go on and encreaſe in that grace and all other graces, that they may thereby more and more give evidence of their being reall believers: Such alſo are the promiſes which are made to the confident waiters on God, rejoycers in God, lovers and fearers of God, &c. In which promiſes, grace for grace to be derived out of the fulneſs of Chriſt, is promiſed to the believer. Some promiſes deſign fit perſons to enter in covenant, and do invite them to come to Chriſt, Such as are, *come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy loaden*, Math. 11. 28. And *Ho! every one that thirſts, come to theſe waters*, &c. *Iſa.* 55.

And beſides theſe promiſes which contain the condition of the covenant, made to them who embrace the condition, and do already believe, ſuch as is, *they that believe in me, ſhall not periſh, but ſhall inherit eternall life*; there are alſo promiſes *conditional*, ſerving to make men who profeſs faith in Chriſt to be reall and ſtedfaſt in the covenant wherein they are at leaſt outwardly, and ſolemnly entered, ſuch as, *Joh.* 15. 7. 10. *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye ſhall ask what ye will, and it ſhall be done unto you, and if ye keep my commands, ye ſhall abide in my love*, &c. And, *Joh.* 12. 26. *If any man ſerve me, him will my father honour*; and, *Joh.* 14. 21. *he that loveth me, ſhall be loved of my father; and I will love him and manifeſt my ſelf unto him.*

Obj. Seing it is certain, that the condition of the covenant of grace, is not the doing of one or moe works, but faith receiving Chriſt offered, without reſpect to our works, as any part of the condition; and ſeing the condition of the covenant, is not the having,

or exercising of such and such vertues, but the receiving of Christ through faith unto righteousnes and eternal life, by the man who hath renounced all confidence in his own works; how *cometh* it to pass, that such conditionall promises are made to them that are indued with, and do exercise, such vertues?

Anſ. Albeit the endeavour to work good works, or the exercise of such and such vertues prescribed by Christ, cannot be the condition of the covenant (for then no man could close covenant with Christ till first he shall find these vertues in himself, and have given proof of his constant exercise thereof) yet such conditionall promises are made use of after a man hath closed covenant with Christ by faith, as conditions required in a true believer, to evidence the sincerity of his faith. And that because many make pretense of their faith in Christ, and yet do turn the grace of God into wantonnes, and do no wayes set themselves to new obedience unto Gods law, and are no wayes careful to bring forth fruits suitable to professed repentance, but are indulgent to their vitious and fleshly lusts, and in effect do renounce all endeavour to exercise good works in stead of renouncing a carnall confidence in good works: Therefore God doth put the endeavour to exercise Christian vertues on all professed believers, as a condition distinguishing a sincere believer from an hypocrit, least any man should please himself, because he is externally in the covenant of Grace, while, it may be, as yet his faith is but a dead faith, not working by love: Against which sort of pretended believers *James* (*chap.* 2.) disputeth. Such conditional promises are directed toward them that are outwardly already in covenant, and do serve for these severall uses.

First, that such as both profes faith in Christ and are endeavouring the duties required in such conditionall promises, may acknowledge, that they have obtained of the Lord grace for grace, grace to be-

lieve and grace to bring forth the fruits of faith.

Secondly, that the honeſt hearted may be encouraged to ſet upon theſe duties, and may hope to be furniſhed for them, out of the rich fountain of Chriſts grace, *John*, 1. 16.

Thirdly, they ſerve to make ſuch as believe in Chriſt, when they feel the in-lake of any ſuch commanded duty, or the bitter root of any vice in themſelves, to humble themſelves in the ſenſe thereof, and to flye more earneſtly to Chriſt the Redeemer, that firſt they may be covered with his righteouſneſs, and then from him receive the power of the holy Ghoſt, to bring forth good fruits, as he hath promiſed, *Ioh.* 15. 5. *If ye abide in me, ye ſhall bring forth much fruit.*

Fourthly, they ſerve to make believers in Chriſt ſubject themſelves to the order of the operation of the holy Ghoſt who giveth grace for grace, and worketh one grace before another in his own order, as the foreſaid promiſes do import

Fifthly, they ſerve to ſtir up believers in Chriſt, to the love and exerciſe of ſuch and ſuch vertues, in the hope of the promiſed reward.

Sixthly, they ſerve to move believers to joyn one vertue to another, for certifying themſelves of their own calling and election by their growth therein, 2 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4, 12.

Laſt of all, they ſerve to make theſe who are deſtitute and void of ſuch qualifications, and are careleſs to have them, manifeſt to themſelves and others, that they *are blind, and cannot ſee a far off: and that they have forgotten that they were in baptiſm. eccleſiaſtically purged from their old ſins*, 2 Pet. 1. 9.

Obj. How can this offer of grace to all the hearers of the Goſpel, and the ſolemn making of a covenant with all that profeſs they do accept of the offer, ſtand with the doctrine of election of ſome, and reprobation of others, or, with the doctrine of Chriſts redeeming of the Elect only, and not of all and every man?

Anſ.

Anſ. The election of ſome and reprobation of others, was made clear of old by Gods making offer of grace unto, and covenanting with, one nation only, and not with any other. *Pſa.* 147. 19, 20. *He ſhewed his word unto* Jacob, *his ſtatutes and his judgments unto* Iſrael; *he hath not dealt ſo with any nation, and as for his judgments they have not known them.*

2. And the offer of grace to all hearers of the Goſpel, and covenanting with all that profeſs to accept the offer, do conſiſt with the election of ſome only, as well now as of old when God made a covenant externall and conditional with all *Iſrael*, of whom the great part were not elected to life, and of whom it is ſaid, *albeit they were in number as the ſand of the ſea, yet a remnant of them only were to be ſaved* Iſa. 10. 22. For, by this courſe, God was not fruſtrat of his purpoſe and fruit of his covenanting with the mixed multitude of Iſraelits; for, the Elect by faith obtained righteouſneſs and life, *but the reſt were blinded*, Rom. 11. 7.

3. This common offer of grace to all the hearers of the Goſpel and the making of a morall covenant with all that do profeſs that they accept the offer, may ſtand with the doctrine of Chriſts redeeming the Elect only, no leſs now, then of old, when Chriſt did make offer of grace to them that were not his ſheep, *Ioh.* 10. 26. and did receive ſundry in among his diſciples in external covenant, who did afterward forſake him, *Joh.* 6. 66. but yet he did ſave, and doth ſave all his Elect ſheep whom *the father hath given unto him*, Joh. 10. 65.

And however this doctrine ſoundeth hatſh in the ears of many, when they hear of any reprobat or not elected, or when they hear that Chriſt did not lay down his life for all and every man, but for the Elect only, and proud men cannot ſubmit themſelves to the truth; yet this doctrine, is found to be moſt true: for, Chriſt the Redeemer, teacheth us, *Math.* 22. 14. *that many are called and few are choſen.* And the Apoſtle teacheth us the ſame, for (*Rom.* 9. 15.) he citeth

Moſes

Moſes to prove the point; *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compaſſion on whom I will have compaſſion*; and, *ver.* 18. *God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* And the Evangeliſt (*Joh.* 12. 37, 38, 39, 40.) teacheth us, that there is a number, to whom God hath decreed not to give grace to believe in Chriſt, albeit they ſhall hear him preached unto them, from *Iſa.* 6. 9, 10. but to the Elect only, *ver.* 13. And, *chap.* 53. 1. he teacheth, that few ſhall believe in Chriſt, yea, none ſave the Elect, to whom the arm of the Lord ſhall be revealed. And our Lord Jeſus teacheth the ſame, *Joh.* 6. 37, 44. that all the Elect ſhall come to him, and that no moe then the father ſhall powerfully draw unto him, can come unto him.

Obj. But there is another forged way of propounding this covenant which ſundry learned men hold forth, who have made many diſciples and followers of their opinion, becauſe of the ſeeming plauſibleneſs of their doctrine: wherein they teach, that Chriſt Jeſus hath died not only for all ſorts of men, but alſo for all and every man, as well for them that periſh as for them that are ſaved; and that albeit he hath not purchaſed righteouſneſs and life eternal determinatly to any man, yet he hath purchaſed by this univerſal redemption, power to every mans free-will, to believe in Chriſt and perſevere in his obedience, without any ſpeciall operation of the holy Spirit in one more then another. And this power of mans free-will, wherewith every child of *Adam* they ſay is born, they call by the name of *univerſall grace*, albeit in effect it is nothing but *univerſall unrenewed nature*, common to every man.

Anſ. We anſwer, how learned ſoever the teachers of ſuch doctrine ſeem to be, yet in this doctrine they are not taught of God: Over ſuch mens learning and wiſdom, Chriſt doth glory (*Math.* 11. 25.) ſaying, *I thank thee, O father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou*

thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes: even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Therefore of such doctrine we say, that it is false, and contrair unto Scripture, how plausible so ever it seem to proud sinners, yea it is a mocking of Christ, and an hinderance of mens repentance and conversion unto God.

1. Their doctrine is contrair to Scripture, because contrair to the covenant of Redemption wherein the Father and the Son Mediatour, are agreed upon the persons to be redeemed, to wit, the elect only, given unto the Son to be redeemed; and agreed upon the price of their Redemption, to wit, the obedience of Christ, even to the death of the crosse; and agreed upon the graces and gifts to be given to the elect, to wit, all saving graces, as faith, repentance, perseverance, and whatsoever belongs to righteousnesse and eternall life; and agreed upon the means and way of gathering in the redeemed, out of all tongues and kindreds and nations, prudently and prosperously, as is proven from Scripture, *Chap.* 4. and shall be more confirmed in the next following chapter.

2. Their doctrine it mocketh Christ, because it chargeth Christ with folly in His making covenant so, as neither Gods justice nor mans common wisdom, would allow, to lay down the price of his blood, and not be sure who should be saved by his blood, to pay as much for *Judas* as for *Peter*, to redeem all and every man, and yet put the disposing of the benefit of Redemption, and fruit of his death out of his own hand, into the hand of mens free-will, to make of it something or nothing as they pleased; to buy a possibility unto men to save themselves actually, without the speciall grace of the holy Ghost, and to cut himself off from having the glory of the actuall conversion of sinners, as far as he is from the blame of mens remaining in sin and infidelity; for, they say he hath purchased alike power to all and every mans free-will, to beleeve or remain in infidelity

delity as they pleaſe; if they uſe it ill, bear they the blame; if they uſe it well, they have the praiſe. They make him to lay down his life for all and every man, and to purchaſe unto all and every one, power to believe in him, and yet never to purpoſe to make offer of the Goſpel to the thouſand part of men. Theſe and many moe blemiſhes they caſt by their doctrine upon the wiſdom and power, and grace of our Lord Jeſus, who is infinitely wiſe and holy in all his doings.

3. This doctrine is a great hinderance of mens repentance and converſion unto God, and to the exerciſe of all holy duties; for, whoſoever believeth this their doctrine, he cannot renounce nor deny his own wit, worth, and ability, that he may come humbly unto Chriſt and follow him, but he muſt ſtand to this conceit of himſelf, which this doctrine teacheth him: yea, ſuch a man cannot ſay to God in humble and hearty prayer, *open mine eyes, that I may behold the wonders of thy Law, and teach me thy ſtatutes*; he cannot in earneſt ſay with *David, incline my heart to thy teſtimonies, and not unto covetouſneſſe*: for, he hath (in his conceit) this power of free-will in himſelf, by common gift to every man, he cannot heartily thank God (if he ſeem to himſelf to do any good) for giving him both to will and to do of his good pleaſure; for, this he hath in his own hand, as this deceitfull doctrine perſwadeth him.

Obj. But ſome there are who maintain the decree of Redemption, and covenant between God and Chriſt (which in ſubſtance, is one with the decree) to be abſolute, concerning the powerfull and invincible converſion, perſeverance and ſalvation of the elect; but concerning the reſt of the world, they tell us of a conditionall decree of ſaving every one who ſhall believe in Chriſt Jeſus, which doth make ſome difference from what is ſaid before.

Anſ. There is indeed an offer to be made to all the hearers of the Goſpel, to whom God in his providence doth ſend his meſſengers, who are appointed to make offer

offer of peace and reconciliation through Christ, upon condition of hearty receiving it, even to such as the Lord knoweth will reject the offer altogether; against whom, his sent messengers, are to shake off the dust of their feet, for a witnesse against them, *Matth.* 10. 13. 14. 15. which accordingly was done by *Paul* and *Barnabas*, *Acts*, 13. 46. 51. and our Lord made offer of himself to his covenanted people the Jews, who did not receive him, *Joh.* 1. 11, 12. and this is to be done according to one of the articles of the covenant of Redemption, concerning the prudent way and maner of Christs singling forth his own elect, from the rest of the world; But this doth no wayes import, or infer, an universall conditionall Redemption or any conditionall decree of God: for, there is a vast difference between a *conditionall decree* of God, and a *decree* for bringing about Gods purpose, by offering peace unto men *upon a condition*. A conditionall decree presupposeth, that God is not resolved what to do about them to whom he shall make offer of peace upon condtion, but that he doth suspend the determination of his own will, till the offer be made, and the man hath refused or accepted of the condition propounded unto him; which sort of decree cannot be in God, to whom are known all his own works, and all mens works from the beginning, *Acts*, 15. 18. and *who doth all things according to the determinat counsell of his own will*, *Ephes.* 1. 11. But a decree to offer peace, upon condition of believing in Christ, is a wise mean both of hiding and executing his own secret decree, and puting the persons to whom he makes the offer unto tryall; that after the drawing forth of the naturall enimity and backwardnesse, which is in all men to come unto Christ, till they be drawn by God, He may have mercy on whom He will, and take the refuse at the hands of others for the glory of His justice and grace, according as He hath determined in Himself. The one way determineth man, as God willeth; the other way determineth God,

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as man willeth. Moreover such a conditionall decree concerning all the rest of mankind, beside the elect, is inconsistent with the Scripture, and the way of Gods dispensation toward the most part of mankind: for, it was not Gods purpose to make the offer of grace, upon condition of believing in Christ, to all and every man, *Psal.* 147. 19. 20. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel, He hath not done so with any nation. And as for His judgments they have not known them.* This same doth *Moses* insinuat, *Deut.* 4. 7, 8. and for his dispensation, experience in all ages sheweth, that the grace of the Gospel is not offered to all and every one, and so they cannot be said to refuse the condition, who never have the offer of grace upon condition; for, our Lord giveth us ground so to reason, speaking of them who should refuse the offer of the Gospel, *Joh.* 15. 22. *if I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin,* (to wit, the guiltinesse of rejecting the offer made in the Gospel) *but now they have no cloak for their sin.* Wherein also he giveth a reason wherefore the offer is made to them, whom he knew would refuse the offer, to wit, that they may be rendered inexcusable, and be without the cloak or pretence of this alleageance, that if they had gotten the offer, then would they have believed and repented: for, this is the pride of *Adams* posterity, they conceive they can believe and obey God, if he shall be pleased to reveal His will to them: And this is sutable to the covenant of Redemption; which, because it was not made for the saving of all and every man, therefore it was not Gods purpose to reveal his Gospel, and make offer of his grace to all and every one, but out of all sorts of men to call effectually the elect, sending the Gospel where they live, or bringing them to the place where the Gospel is preached, that the predestinat might be of purpose effectually called, and justified and sanctified and saved, *Rom.* 8. 28, 30. and because the elect and predestinat were to live in the civil society of

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the rest of the world, it was agreed and decreed, that the offer of the Gospel, should be made to all indifferently where God should send his messengers, because God had determined to bring about the salvation of the elect, so wisely and holily, as none of the hearers of the Gospel should be stumbled, or hindered from embracing the offer made to all the hearers indifferently, without letting any man know of his election, till he have received Christ offered to him and other self-condemned sinners, or declaring any man reprobat in particular, to whom he maketh offer of grace.

Obj. But except we grant an universal redemption and the universal grace (as they call it) of the power of free-will to all and every man, how shall we satisfie our selves about Gods dispensation toward them, who live without the Church, strangers and aliens from the commonwealth of *Israel*?

Ans. As for the elect among them, either they shall be brought to the hearing of the Gospel where it is preached, or the Gospel shall be sent unto them where they do live; and for the rest, the Lord dealeth with them on the terms of the covenant of works, the power of keeping whereof, albeit they have lost in *Adam*, yet they are not loosed from the obligation and penalty of violating thereof, and even they have not laid aside the proud opinion of their ability to follow vertue, and shew vice as they please. And the course which God followeth concerning them, the Apostle sheweth us, *Rom.* 2. 12, 13, 14, 15. *As many as have sinned without the written law* (saith he) *shall perish without the law*, &c. *for, when the gentiles which have not the law* (to wit, the written law given to the Church) *do by nature the things of the law; these having not the law, are a law to themselves.*

Obj. But if the doctrine of redemption of the elect only unto life, be maintained, and power of free-will to believe and obey the Gospel, be not given to every man, specially of these that have the offer of the Gospel,

Gospel, and that without any speciall operation of the holy Ghost, how can it be said, that God dealeth justly, in earnest and fairly, with miserable sinners, when he exhorts, requests and obtests all that hear the Gospel, to come to Christ, and persevere in obedience of the faith, when he knoweth that none o fthem have power to believe or obey, and that to many of them he hath no purpose ever to give grace to repent and believe that they may be saved?

Ans. First, what can the patrons of the power of mens free-wil, speak against the justice and goodnesse of God, when they hear his complaint against Israel, *Psal.* 81.8, 9, 10. &c. *Hear O my people, and I will testifie unto thee O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me, there shall be no strange God in thee, neither shalt thou worship any strange god; I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt; open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it; but my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me, So I gave them up to their own hearts lust, and they walked in their own counsels.* What can they say against Gods justice and fair dealing, when he, having drawn forth to light, by his long continued preaching of his word, the obstinat enimity of the reprobat multitude against him, opened up his decree against all that sort in the sad message committed to Isaiah, *Chap. 6. 9, 10. Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, and understand not; see ye indeed, but perceive not: make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, least they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed,* vers. 13. *yet there shall be a tenth part, the holy seed,* (to wit, the elect) *shall be the substance thereof?* And of this propheſie use is made, when the multitude of misbelievers was like to obscure the glory of Christ, *Joh.* 12. 37, 38. to 42. they heard the offer of grace preached by Christ himself, and saw his manifold wonders, yet they believed not, neither could they believe, because God had rejected them, as

John

John doth prove from the prophesie of *Isaiah*.

Secondly, Is it not fair dealing, when the Lord professeth, that his word shall be preached, and his wonders manifested (for the elects cause, albeit they were but as a tenth part) to a cursed and reprobat multitude, who should hear and see without his blessing, and in his dispensation, doth in effect as he hath professed? As it is a reasonable answer of a husband man and Gardener to his child, asking him, why he beats the whole sheaf and watereth all the Garden, seing the sheaf is moist part straw and chaff, and the garden full of weeds, to say to his child, that he beats the sheaf, that he may sever the corn from the straw and chaff, and that he watereth the ground, where herbs and weeds do grow together, that he may make both to come up above ground, and after that, may pull out the weeds, and foster the herbs for the masters use? So it is a reasonable answer to such as cavil against the preaching of the Gospel, to a mixed multitude of elect and reprobat, to say that the Gospel is preached to both, for the conversion of the elect, and bringing to light the hatred of the reprobat against God, and the offer of his grace.

Thirdly, we grant the Lord knoweth mens wickednesse and inability to obey his commands, and their naturall enimicy against him; but he knoweth also, that all men by nature are proud and puffed up with the conceit of their own wisdom and righteousnesse, and ability, so as they will not acknowledge their sinfulnesse, nor be sensible of their misery and danger of perdition, but do entertain a high esteem and opinion of themselves, and in speciall this, that they love God above all things, and that they can do any thing commanded, at least in such a measure as may reasonably satisfie God, as is to be seen in the example of the Israelits undertaking, *Exod.* 19. therefore, God, in His wisdom before he convert any man, doth pull down this false conceit, by putting his ability to proof by the

preaching of the law, to the intent, that as the Lord knoweth what is in man, ſo man may know it alſo both in his own and other mens experience: and this is brought to light yet more clearly by the preaching of the Goſpel, wherein albeit God make the precious offer of life and ſalvation to every hearer of the Goſpel, if he will acknowledge his ſin, and betake himſelf to Chriſt; yet no man of himſelf will either believe or receive the offer, but will go on in his own counſell and wayes, till God by his grace convert him. This ſickneſſe is common both to the elect and the reprobat, but when the naturall perverſneſſe of both is manifeſted, God cometh and maketh the difference of the one from the other, out of his meer grace, by drawing the elect powerfully to Chriſt and letting the reſt go on to their own perdition in his righteous judgment. And our Lord doth ſo expound the mater, *Joh.* 8. 47. *He that is of God, heareth Gods words; ye therefore hear them not, becauſe ye are not of God.*

Fourthly, the Lord profeſſeth plainly, that in the diſpenſation of his word and works of providence, he intendeth the tryall of men, and the diſcovery of their hearts to themſelves and to others; and what fairer dealing can there be then this? for, *Exod.* 16. 4. He tells them, that he will rain down Manna upon them, to prove them, whither they will walk in his law or not: and, *Exod.* 20. 20. He tells them, he will give them his law and preaching of his word, to prove them, that his fear might be before them: and, *Deut.* 8. 2. that the diſpenſation of his providence toward them, all the fourty years in the wilderneſſe, was to humble them, and to prove them, to know what was in their heart, whether they would keep his commands or not: and, *Deut.* 13. 1, 2, 3. that he would ſuffer falſe prophets to ariſe among them, to prove them, and to try whether they would love the Lord their God with all their heart. And to this ſame intent, we are advertiſed, that Chriſt ſhould be not only a tryed

ſtone,

ſtone, but alſo a ſtone for tryall, ſet for the ruine of ſome, and raiſing up of other ſome, *Iſa.* 28. 16, 17. and, 8. 14. compared with *Luke*, 2. 34, 35. for, by this maner of diſpenſation, the Lord maketh manifeſt, that both the elect and reprobat are concluded under ſin and unbelief of themſelves, and that no man can come to Chriſt, except the Father draw him, that he may have mercy on whom he will have mercy. And this maner of probation of men by a common offer of grace unto all, is a part of that prudence, whereby Chriſt, by his conditionall promiſes and exhortations, and the preaching of the Goſpel to all hearers, maketh all theſe that are outwardly called, to be without excuſe, and fiſheth forth the elect out of the ſea of ſin and miſery, and out of the ſociety of thoſe that periſh: of which prudence, Iſaiah ſpeaketh, *chap.* 52. 13. *Behold, my ſervant ſhall deal prudently and proſper, and be extolled, and be very high.*

Wherefore this wiſdom of God in converting the elect, without giving cauſe of ſtumbling unto any of the reſt, is rather to be admired and praiſed, then to be diſputed againſt, as we are taught, *Rom.* 11. 33, 34, 35, 36. *O the depth of the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God, how unſearchable are his judgments, and his wayes paſt finding out?*

Obj. But for all this, the carnall wiſdom of proud men is ſuch, as neither is it ſubject to God, nor indeed can be, but ſtandeth in hoſtile enimity againſt him, and will not be quiet, but when it heareth what is ſaid, *Rom.* 9. 18. that God *will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth*, will ſay, as it is, *verſ.* 19. *why doth God yet find fault?* for, *who hath reſiſted his will?* this doctrine, ſay they, doth hinder mens repentance altogether.

Anſ. We anſwer with the Apoſtle, *verſ.* 20. *Nay but O man, who art thou that replyeth againſt God?* whether doſt thou compear procuratour for the reprobat and for Satan the enemy of God, to quarrell and diſ-

pute with God anent his righteous decrees? If thou wilt avow this, we leave thee and all such proud and presumptuous misbelievers of plain doctrine to reckon with your Judge. But if thou speak only for thy self, we shall let thee see, that this doctrine shall not hinder thee from repentance. If then thou shalt say, I will not dispute against God, but do desire earnestly to be satisfied about my self, for I believe, that many are reprobat and few are chosen; and my fear is, that I be found of the worst sort, and do not know how to rid my self of my doubts and fears. For answer, we shall deal with thee in a friendly maner; and, first, we put thee in remembrance, that God hath served an inhibition on all men, not to medle with the secret counsell of God, *Deut.* 29. 29. *The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but these things that are revealed belong unto us and our children for ever.* Therefore do not hearken to this suggestion, but go about thy duty. We ask then, first, art thou convinced of thy sin and ill deserving? If thou say, I am a sinner, and cannot answer for one of a thousand of my by-gone sins, for which God may justly, and I fear he shall in effect reject me, we answer unto thee, it is to good purpose that thou art so far convinced of sin, as to judge thy self worthy of death, and utter exterminion from his mercy: mean time be comforted thus far, that thou art not of the number of those who confide in their own righteousnesse, nor of the number of them who trust in their own strength, or power of their free-will.

We ask again, doth thy by-gone life displease thee? and wouldst thou have thy sins forgiven, and thy self reconciled with God? doth Christ, offering himself in the Gospel, please thy soul, when thou heareſt from his word, that he craveth nothing of thee, save that thou welcome his offer, and consecrat thy self to him, that so in him thou mayest have righteousnesse and sanctification and salvation? If thou answer, that the searcher of hearts knoweth thy hearty desire to be reconciled

conciled to God in Christ, to live before him hereafter as a reconciled child, there is good hope of salvation for such a one as thou art.

Thirdly, we say, seing thou hast heard the law convincing thee of sin, and hast believed Gods word so far, why dost thou not believe him also, when in the Gospel thou heareſt his offer and call unto all self-condemned sinners, to come unto Christ, and rest their weary souls upon him? who hath excepted thee from the embracing of mercy offered in Jesus Christ? look therefore what his word saith to all sinners flying for refuge unto Christ, who is the hope set before sinners, and leave him not, whatsoever be thy fears; for, he that hungereth and thirsteth for righteousneſſe through Christ, shall be satisfied.

CHAP. VII.

For a further clearing and confirmation of the doctrine about the three Covenants, from Jer. 31. *and* Heb. 8:

THe prophet *Jeremiah* giveth us a short compend of the former doctrine anent these three covenants, *chap.* 31. *verſ.* 31. &c. whereof the Apostle giveth a clear commentary, *Heb.* 8. *verſ.* 6, 7. &c.

As to the covenant of Redemption, it is here presupponed to be past, as the Apostle, expounding this place of *Jeremiah*, giveth us to understand, while he sheweth us, that the covenant of grace was no other wayes purchased, then by the Mediation of our Lord Jesus, transacting about the covenant of Redemption with the Father. And that he may give us to understand this,

1. Christ is called the *Mediatour of a better covenant*, *Heb.* 8. to wit, of the covenant of Grace.

2. The covenant of Grace is designed by the name of a *Testament*, which giveth us to understand, that Christ the Mediatour, did not obtain the making of

this covenant on a leſſe price then the laying down of his life, that all the benefits contained in theſe better promiſes, might firſt be his *goods*, to diſpone upon, as he pleaſed; and that he being reſolved to die, did make his *Teſtament*, and leave them all in legacy to the redeemed, his heirs and aſſigneys, deſigned from eternity.

3. The Mediatour making his Teſtament, is called *Jehovah*, not a meer man, but God to be incarnat, making an unchangeable Latter-will or Teſtament, which of neceſſity required the death of the Teſtatour, that it might be ratified, *Heb.* 9. 15, 16. and the death of a Teſtatour not a meer man, but the Son of God to be incarnat and to die, who had life in himſelf, that he might lay down his life, and take it up again.

4. The goods which he purchaſed according to the covenant of Redemption, and left in legacy to his heirs, are all and every bleſſing which do belong to godlineſſe and life eternall, as *remiſſion* of ſin, and writting of the law in their hearts, &c.

5. The redeemed, and deſigned heirs, are not all and every man, but the elect only, theſe that were to be ſaved only, and who were to be effectually called, and indued with the ſaving knowledge of God, who from the leaſt to the greateſt, *were all of them to know the Lord*: not ſuch as were the reprobat fathers, nor their unbelieving children, but the choſen ſociety of the Iſrael of God and of Chriſts family, *the houſe of Judah*, which is the tribe of Chriſt; for, the Apoſtle doth extend theſe promiſes unto the covenant between God and the elect, to be gathered under the Evangel unto Chriſt, out of Jews and Gentiles.

As to the covenant of works, it is certain, firſt, that God made a covenant of grace in ſubſtance, and upon the mater with the fathers that were brought out of Egypt, as we may gather from the conſideration of the parties and articles of that covenant: for, albeit God repeated the covenant of works, and declared the force of the law, for binding the curſe upon all tranſ-

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greſſours thereof; yet he did preſſe the law on them in order unto their reconciliation, by the ſacrifice of the Lamb of God, to be in due time offered up, and did teach them, that Chriſt was the end of the law, for righteouſneſſe to every one that believed.

2. It is certain, that in the framing of this covenant of grace, between God and the viſible Church of the fathers, God did make the promiſes of righteouſneſſe and eternall life and ſpirituall bleſſings, under the vail of temporall types, upon conditions more hard and difficile in appearance, then the new covenant doth require: for, this the Apoſtle ſheweth to us plainly, *Heb.* 8. 6.

3. It is certain, that the un-believing Fathers did not take up, nor underſtand the covenant of Grace, but turned it over in a covenant of Works, which is manifeſt by comparing the words of *Jeremiah* and the commentary thereupon by the Apoſtle: For, *Jeremiah* ſaith, that they did tranſgreſs the Covenant, albeit God did ſhew *himſelf a husband unto theſe* un-believing Fathers; that is, they changed the covenant of Grace in a covenant of Works of their own framing, and tranſgreſſed that Covenant alſo. And the Apoſtle ſaith, they *did not continue in that covenant*, becauſe they changed it to themſelves in a covenant of Works, according to which Covenant God did deal with them: for, in ſtead of being a husband to them, he exacted of them the penalty of the broken covenant of Works, and *Lorded* it over them, and *did not regard them*, Heb. 8. 6. For, they ſought after the righteouſneſs of works, and not to have righteouſneſs by faith; and therefore did he deſpiſe them, and dealt with them after the tenor of the covenant of Works. And it is obſervable, that the words of *Jeremiah* do comprehend the Apoſtles meaning; for, the words may bear both, that God was a *husband* unto them; to wit, in making a covenant of Grace with them; and that he dealt with them as a *Lord over* them, by exacting of them the penalty of the

broken covenant of Works, and of the rejected covenant of Grace.

As to the covenant of Grace, the Apostle speaketh of it in expres's termes, first, by Gods promising that he would make *a new Covenant* with the house of *Israel* and *Judah*.

Secondly, by his setting better promises before them then these were which were made to the Fathers in the wilderness.

Thirdly, by his giving no other cause of bestowing so great blessings on them, but his own good-will and pleasure.

Fourthly, by his requiring no other condition of them but faith, that they who feel in themselves, the want and need of the promised blessings, and are convinced of their own unworthiness, might give credit unto God that maketh the promise, and so embrace the promises, and apply them to their own use.

As to the external dispensation of the Covenant, it is certain, first, that it was common to all that were externally called, to all the members of the visible Church: for, the covenant made in the wilderness with the elect Fathers and reprobat, with the believers and un-believers, with those that rejected the covenant of Grace and the offer of Righteousness by faith, and with those who looked through the vail afar off to Christ coming, and were saved, was one and the same.

2. It is certain, that the external form of the covenant of Grace, was more obscure and vailed over by the types and figures of the levitical ceremonies before Christ came; but after his coming, it was propounded in clearer and better promises.

3. A day is set, to wit, the fulness of time, when these shadows and typical figures should be abolished, and the grace of God should be set before his people, to be looked upon with open face.

4. And yet, the grace of God was not so hid and obscurely propounded to the Church before Christs coming

coming, as it could not be taken up by the children of God; for, in the midſt of the ſhadows and dark typs, the ſtar-light of gracious promiſes did ſhine, and the doctrine of the new Covenant, was in ſubſtance holden forth by the Prophets; and one inſtance thereof doth appear in this place of *Jeremiah*.

As to the internal covenant of Grace, firſt, theſe things which are promiſed in that Covenant, do declare in what ſtate God doth find men whom he doth convert and draw into covenant with himſelf; for, when the Lord taketh in hand, that he will write his law in their heart, that he will teach them himſelf to know him, by the teaching of his Word and Spirit; and that he will forgive their ſins, he preſuppoſeth, that lawleſs rebellion did reign in them, with blindneſs of mind and hardneſs of heart; and that the Elect, by nature, are without law, without God, without faith, before he reform them according to the Articles, or tenor of the covenant of Redemption.

2. Albeit, by nature, the law be written in mens hearts, as to the knowledge of ſundry moral duties, and ſo far as is ſufficient to make them inexcuſable for their contraveening theſe ſparks of light, *Rom.* 1. 20. and, 2, 14. 15. Yet, the writing of the law, here promiſed is ſpiritual and ſuper-natural, inlightning their minds by the light of Gods Spirit, and renewing their heart; and, in effect, the thing promiſed is actual converſion of them.

3. And ſeing converſion is here promiſed by Chriſt the Teſtator abſolutely, he hath taken in hand abſolutely to effectuat it: for, it is not ſaid, I will put my law in their heart *if they pleaſe to ſuffer* me, but determinatly, *I will put my law, I will write my law in their heart and inward parts*, that is, I will make them willing who were averſe, and obedient to my law who were rebellious.

4. Chriſt, the Teſtator, doth in all this, not ſatisfie himſelf by promiſing the illumination of the mind and

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the inclining of the heart, for a time; but promiſeth alſo to make a ſolid and permanent work of it, by making them perſevere, which is imported in the words *I will put*, and *I will write it*; for, to write it, is as much as to fix and ingrave it, that it may remain.

5. The chief head of the Covenant, and which in ſubſtance doth contain all bleſſings, is ſet down in theſe words, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people:* for, by this promiſe, right is granted unto the true heart-convert and confederat, firſt, unto God himſelf, then unto all his benefits, whereof he hath need, in order to righteouſneſs and eternal life: for, they whoſe God the Lord is, they do live, and ſhall live for ever, as Chriſt ſaith, *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*, Matth. 22. 32. And all particular promiſes, what are they elſe but explications of this great and firſt promiſe, and applications thereof to his childrens caſes in particular?

Gifts of the Spirit are promiſed here, and indowments whereof diſciples have need, whereof pilgrims going home to that heavenly city have need: yea, the Spirit himſelf is promiſed to them, who is to remain with them to the end of their life, as a directer and leader, *They ſhall all know me, ſaith the Lord*, that is, as Chriſt doth interpret it, *They ſhall be all taught of God*, Joh. 6. 45.

7. The Lord ſheweth here, that he will deal with men, in their regeneration and reconciliation, as with reaſonable creatures, by preſerving and not deſtroying them in their ſimple naturals, by maintaining and not over-turning the liberty of their free-will; *I will make a Covenant*, ſaith he, *with the houſe of* Judah. Now a Covenant is a free and voluntar Contract.

8. He ſheweth, that he is Lord and Over-ruler of mans will, who can turn it about as he pleaſeth, and that he is not hindred nor impeded to execute and bring to paſſe, whatſoever he hath purpoſed to do, by the variable contingency or differency of mans will, but can work

work *upon* the will of man, and *by* the will of man, what pleaſeth him; and by ſecond cauſes, whether working freely and contingently, or by a naturall neceſſity, can wiſely, holily and powerfully bring about his own purpoſe in his ſet time; *the dayes come*, ſaith he, *wherein I will make a covenant with the houſe of Iſrael.* Wherein he taketh upon him the effectuall work of covenanting, promiſing not only for his own part, but alſo for the elect of Iſrael and Judahs part; for, his promiſe is, that it ſhall *come to paſſe*, that by inclining their will unto reconciliation, they ſhall willingly conſent unto a covenanting with God: for, he ſaith, *I will make a covenant with them*; he ſaith not, *if they will*, but abſolutely, I will make them cloſe a covenant with Me heartily.

9. The party to be converted and to enter in covenant, is not all men, nor every ſociety, but the *Church*, Gods own family; not every nation, but Gods people, choſen out of all nations on the whole earth, *I will make a covenant with the houſe of Iſrael*: as it is alſo cleared, *Deut.* 7. 6, 7. 8.

10. The Church of Chriſt under the Goſpel, as the Apoſtle looketh on this place, is comprehended under the name of *Iſrael* and *Judah*; partly, becauſe Iſrael hath the priority of all other people in Gods covenant; and partly, becauſe all the Chriſtian Church of the Jews and Gentiles, is comprehended under the name of the houſe of *Judah*, which is Chriſts tribe, whereof he came, who is the prince and head of all believers and confederat perſons, reconciled to God; and partly, becauſe the Iſraelits or Jews, have this prerogative above all other people and nations on the earth, that of that race of people, the poſterity of *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, there ſhall be in all ages ſome elected perſons, till the great bulk of the now ſcattered people turn Chriſtians, and till the end of the world, *Rom.* 11. 5.

11. No age, old nor young, no ſex, man nor woman, nor any externall difference of men that can be

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put between one and another in this life, doth exclude any man from the benefit of this covenant, or commend a man to God that his person should be respected of God, but all and every one whom God shall externally call, may safely accept the offer of grace, and joyn themselves to Jesus Christ; for, the grace of God here, is extended unto all degrees and sorts of men, from *the least to the greatest.*

12. In the mean time God knoweth his own, man be man, both great and small, and with the same love, doth embrace them all; for, the promise is, that all those elect who are known to God, shall know him from the *greatest* even to the *least:*

13. The great obstacle which may be supposed to exclude any from coming in to God through Christ, is here removed; to wit, the greatness and multitude of by-gone sins, cast up against the in-coming of some when they are called: The mercy and grace of Christ the Testator, taketh this doubt out of the way, saying, *I will forgive their iniquity, and their sins I will no more remember*, Jer. 31. 34.

14. This promised remission, the Lord will not have limited nor abridged, neither by the number of sins, nor grievousness thereof, nor kinds of sins, but he purposeth and promiseth to take away all iniquity by forgiveness, and to forget their by-gone sins, *ver.* 34. And confirmeth this by repeating the promise of not casting them off who shall acknowledge him, *ver.* 37.

15. From this promise the Apostle (*Heb.* 10.) draweth this consequence, that under the Gospel, or new covenant, there is but one offering for sin; which offering cannot be repeated, in regard that full remission thereby is purchased: For, (*ver.* 14.) he saith, *by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, and this he proveth from the words of the covenant, *ver.* 15, 16, 17. whence he concludes, *ver.* Now, *where remission of these are, there is no more offering for sin.* 16.

16. If any ſhall ask for the cauſe of ſo rich mercy and grace covenanted, he ſhall find none in man at all. The only cauſe is ſet down here, to wit, the will and good pleaſure of God, *I will forgive their iniquity*, ſaith the Lord, *and their ſins will I remember no more*, that is, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.

17. Becauſe the Lord our God and Mediatour, is here making his Teſtament, wherein alſo he taketh upon him to be executor of his own latter will, and to perform all that is promiſed, therefore in confirmation, he ſubſcribeth and ſets down his name, *Jer.* 31. 35. *Thus ſaith the Lord*; and that his ſubſcription may be of weight with all men, he deſigns himſelf by his ſtately ſtiles or titles, taken from his creation and government of the creatures, *Thus ſaith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the ſtarrs for a light by night, which divideth the Sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hoſts is his name.*

This he ſaith, leaſt the faith of his people ſhould be ſhaken by their looking to impediments and difficulties, and that they may gather ſtrength and courage to go on in the Lords way conſtantly, when they conſider the power of God in the workmanſhip and government of the world.

18. Unto his ſubſcription, he addeth, both witneſſes and pledges of his promiſes, *ver.* 36. *If thoſe ordinances depart from before me, ſaith the Lord, then the ſeed of* Iſrael (which comprehendeth the ſeed of *Abrahams* faith) *ſhall ceaſe from being a nation before me for ever*, ver. 36.

19. Laſt of all, leaſt any man, in the conſideration of the grievouſneſs of his ſin, or of the apparent impoſſibility of performing theſe promiſes, ſhould doubt, of remiſſion of ſins to be granted to the confederat, or of the perſeverance of the true believer, or of the perpetuation of the Church, the Lord bids his people that

come

come in to him, be confident and quiet, ver. 37. saying, *If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of* Israel *for all that they have done, saith the Lord,* Now, both these are impossible, that we can measure the heavens, or search the bottom of the earth: Therefore it is impossible, that this covenant and the promises made therein, should fail.

The maner of dispensing the new covenant outwardly and inwardly.

AS to the dispensation of this covenant, both outwardly and inwardly, first, this promise of a new covenant, is a challenge against the mis believing fathers, who slighted the offer of grace and followed after the covenant of works, seeking righteousnes by works; which covenant of works, they were not able to perform and it served unto them only for their condemnation: This the Apostle doth collect from this place of *Jeremiah*, Heb. 8. 8. *He found fault with the fathers.*

Secondly, the Apostle observeth the wonderfull mercy of God, that while he is finding fault with the incredulity of the fathers, who lived under this old covenant, he will avenge this their incredulity, ignorance, foolishnes and ingratitude, by telling them, that he will make a new covenant and give them that were then living a taste of it, for recovering them, finding fault with them, he saith, *the dayes come, that I will make a new covenant.*

Thirdly, this covenant of grace made with the Church, is procured by Christ, to this end, that the covenant of *Redemption* might be brought unto a reall accomplishment by the covenant of *Grace.* This observation is grounded upon this, that Christ is called the *Mediatour* of this better covenant, *Heb.* 8. 6. For, he will draw up a clear covenant of grace with his people, that the blessings purchased unto them according

ing to the covenant of Redemption, may be applyed unto them by this covenant of grace and reconciliation.

Fourthly, the preaching of the promiſe of this new covenant, is a moſt fit mean to draw on and cloſe this covenant of grace between God and his people, who are the called according to his purpoſe: This obſervation is gathered from *Jeremiahs* preaching and *Pauls* preaching of this unto the hearers of the Goſpel, to this very intent and purpoſe.

Fifthly, in the promiſing and preaching of this covenant of grace, God will have all mens opinions, thoughts and conceptions about this myſtery, limited unto, and depending upon, his mouth alone, revealing the ſame in his Word: This obſervation is gathered from the Lords invitation of all men to take heed what he is to ſay, and what he is to let forth in this mater. *Behold the dayes come, ſaith the Lord*, wherein I will do ſuch and ſuch things, which now I fore-tell I will do.

Sixthly, both the making and way of making a covenant with man, dependeth abſolutely on God either to make a covenant or not, to make what covenant he pleaſeth to make, upon what conditions he pleaſeth, and with what perſons he pleaſeth to make his covenant. No man ever preveened God, deſiring him to make a covenant, but God did preveen all men, he preveened *Adam* once before his fall, and again by preaching the Goſpel in his audience after the fall, he preveened the fathers in the wilderneſs, he preveened his poſterity, that have lived or ſhall live in the latter dayes, promiſing to make a covenant with thoſe who were not come into the world, but were to come long after the promiſe.

Seventhly, the Lord will have all men to underſtand, that the end of his covenanting with men, both in that old dark form, and in the new clear form, is his own glory: For, he hath made all things for himſelf,

ten, even the wicked for the day of evil. This observation is gathered, partly, from this, that the Lord bringeth forth his soveraignty for a reason of his rejecting of the misbelieving fathers in the wilderneſſe, *I deſpiſed them, I regarded them not; I Lorded it over them*, as the originall may bear. And partly, from this, that he bringeth forth his own will and pleaſure, for a reaſon of his ſhewing grace to their poſterity, *I will forgive their ſins*, &c.

8. He ſheweth alſo, that in his works he doth not *depend upon man*, but that all his works are known unto him from the beginning, and that it is determined by himſelf, what, and how, and by what means, he will do every thing. This may appear from this, that he doth fore-tell what he is to do about the ſaving of his elect, Jews and Gentiles, being no leſſe certain to do what he promiſed about the poſterity to come, then he was certain of what was paſt already about their incredulous fathers.

9. The Lord will have us to know, that laying aſide the conſideration of his decrees, it is ſimply in the power of God to puniſh ſin, in whom he will and to pardon ſin through a Mediatour, to whom he will, that is, to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and to pardon whom he will pardon. This is collected from this, that the fathers do ſin in the wilderneſſe and juſtly periſh and the poſterity do ſin and are graciouſly pardoned.

10. In all this proceeding, no violence is uſed upon the will of men, whether of them that periſh, or of them that are ſaved. The ſaved do walk freely and willingly in the way of ſalvation, as their hearty choiſe; and theſe that periſh, walk willingly in the way of perdition. God proceeds with both by a voluntary covenant, as this place doth ſhew.

11. In them that periſh the meritorious and culpable cauſe of their perdition is in themſelves; but in them that are ſaved, no cauſe is found at all, but the

cauſe

cause is found in Gods grace alanerly. This is collected from this, that the Lord giveth the reason of the perdition of the misbelieving fathers, from their sins and transgression of covenant, *they transgressed my covenant, and I despised them*; and of the salvation of their posterity, no other cause but this, *their sins I will not remember any more.*

12. The Lords justice is cleared in the perdition of them that perish, because he gave precepts and promises, and other morall motives, to hinder them from sinning, and to move them to keep his wayes, albeit he did not effectually impede their running on to sin according to their inclination, and proneness to follow their own way. This is collected from this, that the Lord saith, he made a covenant with their fathers, and they did break it.

13. It pleaseth God, not only to give his precepts unto men, concerning their duty, but also to condescend so far unto them as to open up in a part his decrees and deep designs about mens salvation, that they, being admitted somewhat near to the treasures of His wisdom, goodness, justice and mercy, might be so much the more wise, and the more stirred up to discharge their duty, and make use of his dispensation. This we collect from his revealing of the decree of election of the posterity of *Israel*, and drawing them effectually into a covenant of grace with himself.

14. The Lord doth reveal to the world the doctrine of election unto life, only in the general, and doth not descend to the nomination of them in particular. This is collected from this, that he doth promise to convert and draw into a new covenant of grace, the posterity of *Israel* and *Judah*, without nameing particularly these that were designed for that salvation.

15. Albeit the Lord keepeth up the names of the elect (except of some few) before their conversion, yet, he giveth forth marks and evidences, whereby after their conversion, they may be known both to them-

ſelves and others. This we collect from this, that He ſets down infallible marks of the elect, who are to be Gods covenanted people or worſhipers of God, that they do know God, and have his law written in their hearts and inward parts.

16. As for the reprobation of any man, the Lord hath given no certain mark as long as they live, (except that malicious and wilfull rejecting and oppoſing of known Chriſt Jeſus) to the intent that none ſhould dare to exclude, either themſelves or others from repentance and hope of mercy, ſo long as the day of Gods long-ſuffering and patience doth laſt. This is collected from this, that God doth not make mention of the reprobation of theſe misbelieving fathers, while they are living, but now long after they are dead; and this mention making of them, is in general only, and not by nameing them particularly.

17. Albeit in the diſpenſation of the covenant of grace, for application of ſaving mercies, the mater be ſo wiſely carryed by God, that both the decree and covenant of Redemption is keeped cloſs, as to particular names, and yet it is effectually made out in the applying of grace to individuall perſons, as the agreement is made between God and Chriſt Mediatour; yet, the covenant of Redemption, is made this far clear, that it did not paſſe for the converſion and ſalvation of all and every man, by this evidence, that not ſo much as the offer of the covenant of grace, and reconciliation ſhall be made to all and every nation, far leſſe to all and every ſingular perſon: but that the people and nation of *Iſrael* and *Judah* is choſen out of all people and nations in the world, comprehending ſuch others as ſhould be called unto their ſociety, and the fellowſhip of the olive tree among them, as *Pſal.* 147. 19, 20. holdeth forth. And in this place the whole elect, under the Goſpel, are taken up under the name of this one nation.

18. That the decree of election of ſome, may both be

be keeped up as to particular nomination, and yet have certain execution and be performed, the Lord taketh up all his confederats whether in the letter or ſpirit alſo, under the ſame common name. This is gathered from this, that the misbelieving Iſraelits that periſhed in the deſart, with whom God made a covenant and they did break it, are deſigned under the common name of *fathers*, and are taken up in that covenant under the name of *ſpouſe*, *Jer.* 31. 32. and the elect poſterity are taken up under the common name of the houſe of *Iſrael* and *Judah*.

19. Such as the covenanters are, in regard of their inward eſtate, ſuch is the covenant wherein they really are, or ſuch is the covenant in relation to their perſons. Unto the reprobat who do change for their part, the covenant of grace into the covenant of works, the covenant of grace becometh in effect the covenant of works, and is rendered void to them, as the Apoſtle doth threaten the *Galatians*, *Gal.* 5. 4. and as did befall the phariſaicall fathers, who are here declared as inſtances; but the covenant of grace unto the elect and true believers, remains ſtill the covenant of grace, from which they do not fall, nor can altogether fall, as the compariſon here between the fathers in the wilderneſſe and their elect poſterity maketh evident.

20. The Lord hath wiſely joyned life with the means and way to life and death with the way to death, and will not have that ſeparated which he hath joyned. This is collected from this, that the fathers by not continuing in the covenant, are deſpiſed and rejected of God, and ſo periſhed; but their elect poſterity, having the law of God in their hearts, and cleaving conſtantly unto the Lord, are ſaved.

21. The Lord will have this doctrine taught where His word is preached, concerning the election of ſome, and reprobation of other ſome; of Gods covenanting with ſome people and perſons, and not offering a covenant to other ſome; of covenanting with ſome in the

letter, and with other ſome in the ſpirit alſo, to this end and intent, that men, leaving the ſearching in particular of that which God hath keeped ſecret in the particular, may follow commanded duties, repent their ſins and flee to Chriſt offered unto them, and take up his yoke upon them, and beware that they neither deſpair, nor yet preſume, or turn the grace of God into wantonneſſe. This we gather from this, that God ſendeth forth *Jeremiah* to preach theſe things, not only to the viſible Church of the Jews going into exile and captivity, but alſo to all who ſhall hear this doctrine from him to the end of the world. And the Apoſtle, repeating this doctrine for the uſe of the Chriſtian Church of Jews and Gentiles, doth confirm this.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the prudent application of divine covenants in general.

HAving ſpoken of theſe three divine covenants concerning mens ſalvation, it follows now to ſpeak of the application thereof, firſt, in generall, and then more ſpecially.

In the mater of application, we muſt, firſt, look upon Gods effectuall applying and working in the hearers of theſe covenants, ſuch effects as he hath intended by theſe covenants to bring to paſſe: Next, we muſt look upon the means whereby he ordinarly doth convey and work his intended works in men. And thirdly, we muſt look upon the prudent way of uſe making of theſe means, both by Paſtors and people for peoples good.

2. As to the firſt, the Lords effectuall application, is a reall and actuall beſtowing the good of theſe covenants upon his own, by way of powerfull working on their ſpirits. Such as are, 1. the giving the grace of underſtanding of the Scripture; And, 2. the belief of what is underſtood; And, 3. the application of the doctrine of the law, concerning mens ſin and miſery, to their own conſcience; And, 4. the making

them

them judge themselves according to the law; And. 5. the raising of sorrow in their hearts and fear of wrath; And, 6. the setting of their eye upon Christ for delivery from sin and death; And, 7. the makeing them perceive a possibility and probability that they may be saved; And, 8. to have an earnest desire after reconciliation with God in Christ; And, 9. the making of his own to cast themselves over on Christ and to believe on him; And, 10. the making them to consecrat themselves to God in Christ, reconciling the world of meer grace to himself, not imputing transgression to the reconciled through Christ; And, 11. the making them to wonder at the riches of the free grace of God, who in a self-condemned sinner, desirous to be reconciled with him, requireth no personall dignity, no good work, which may commend him to God, but only that he would receive and welcome Christ offered in the Gospel, as the only necessary and sufficient remedy against all sin and misery, requiring no other condition, but that he flee from the curse of the law, and the wrath to come, unto Christ the Redeemer, who offereth himself unto lost sinners in the preaching of the Gospel, that through him the beleiver may be justified and sanctified, and saved for ever; And, 12. after wondering raised in the hearts of his children, the making them cleave closly to Christ, and to strive against all temptations, which might weaken their faith, and to rejoyce in believing, and to be zealous for the Lords glory, and carefull to bring forth more and more fruits of faith and love, and working such other gracious works of his Spirit in his children, as may more and more mortifie sin in them, and perfect the image of God in his new creature. This divine, magisteriall and effectuall application of reall blessings, belongeth to God only, and is the end of all ministeriall application, which is of the externall means appointed of God, to be made use of by men, the blessing whereof must be left to God to bestow, on

whom, how, and in what measure, and in what time it pleaseth him, as the Apostle doth shew unto us, 1 Cor. 3. 6. *I have planted, and Apollos hath watered, but God giveth the increase.*

3. The externall means, which do serve unto the foresaid divine operations, are, 1. The doctrine of life and salvation, set down in the Scripture, to be heard and read by all men, and meditat upon with prayer for a blessing; And, 2. sent ministers, to whom God hath committed the word of reconciliation, by whose ministery disciples may be made unto Christ out of all nations; And, 3. the administration of the Sacrament, whereby they with their children are baptized, and gathered together in severall Churches, and put under the government of such Church-officers, as his Testament hath appointed; And, 4. these Churches joyned together in the most edifying way of mutuall communion, and strengthening one another in true doctrine, pure worship and discipline, which Gods providence doth make way for, that the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus may continue and grow in the world, and all his ordinances may be exercised publickly and privatly to the best advantage of the Church, for perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministery, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, as the Apostle requireth, *Ephes.* 4. 12, 13, 14.

4. In the use of these external means, and specially in the application of these three covenants, prudence is required, both in Pastors and people, to which ingent and purpose these following considerations may serve.

1. The remedy of every sickness of the conscience, must be grounded on the doctrine of salvation set down in Scripture; which doctrine must first, be known and believed by the party diseased, before he can receive benefit thereby: And therefore that a prudent application of wholsom and saving doctrine may be made, of necessity the party diseased must be acquainted

ed with the doctrine to be applyed unto him, before he can make use thereof to his advantage: for, experience teacheth us, how hardly gross ignorants can be convinced of sin, add how hardly such can be comforted, when their conscience is wakened with the terrours of God, because they neither know from the Word of God, the cause of the terrour and anxiety wherein they are, nor can they be capable of the remedy of their evill, except they, first, be catechised in the heads of saving doctrine, held forth in the Law and Gospel, which instruction can hardly be given or received in a short time; and howsoever, a prudent Pastor must make use of time as it is offered, yet when death is near to the party to be instructed, how little is it that can be expected to be done?

2. The order of applying saving doctrine, doth not begin at the application either of the covenant of Redemption, or at the covenant of Grace, but he that will follow a right order, must begin at the law and covenant of works, under the yoke whereof we are all born by nature, children of wrath. And if a man apply that covenant and law to his heart, and subscribe his own dittey and deserved condemnation, then may he turn up his soul to Christ Jesus the Redeemer, and flye to him for refuge, and accept the offer which he makes in his Gospel of a new covenant of grace for pardoning of sin and reconciling unto God in himself the person who is fled unto him, and for sanctifying and saving of him; which covenant, when a chased soul doth consent unto, and layeth hold on Christ offered for relief from sin, wrath, death and hell, then may he ascend by faith unto the covenant of Redemption, and apply to himself with Gods allowance all the saving graces purchased by Christ, by that covenant, to all that flye unto him and believe in him.

3. This order of making use of these three covenants, many do not follow, but they begin at the covenant of Redemption, and will either be satisfied about this, whe-

ther they be elected or not, given to Christ to be redeemed or not, (which is a secret and not to be inquired into, save in Gods order as we have shown) or else they will not enter upon the use-making of these means which God hath appointed to bring a man to repentance and faith in Christ. This is a tentation of Sathan, which if they yield unto, it shall lead them either to resolute profanity with *Cain*, or to anxious desperation with *Judas*.

4. There are some also, who make leap-year of the covenant of works, and do take no notice of their own naturall sinfulness or wrath due to them, and lying on them by nature; but neglecting this order, do start a race, and run to a presumptuous avouching of their faith in Christ, and will thrust in themselves in the number of the elect, given before the world was, unto Christ to be redeemed and saved, pretending their believing of the Gospel, when they have not believed the doctrine of the law, and so do turn the grace of God into lasciviousness and wantonness, and go about the satisfying and fulfilling of their own lusts. Wherefore it is necessary, that every man who seeketh to be saved, and hath resolved to follow Gods way to attain unto salvation, do begin first, at the covenant of works, and examine himself according to the rule of the morall law, how he hath behaved himself in obedience unto the first and second table, and having found a dittey great enough, that he judge himself and passe sentence on himself as guilty and worthy of everlasting wrath for his sins. Secondly, when he is convinced of sin and deserved wrath, and of his own utter impotency to deliver himself, then let him flee to Christ and lay hold on the grace offered in the Gospel, applying the same to his burthened conscience, according to the tennor of the covenant of grace, fully revealed in the Gospel. And, thirdly, when he hath in earnest consented unto the covenant of grace and reconciliation, and hath laid hold on Christ, with unfaigned faith,

seeking

seeking in him remission of sin, and renovation of life, being resolved by the grace of Christ, to use the means appointed of him for that end; Now it is time and not till now, to look up unto the covenant of *Redemption*, and there to read his own name, as it were, written in the book of life, and to acknowledge that the measure of repentance and faith in Christ bestowed on himself now in experience, hath flowed from that fountain of Gods love and free grace through Christ.

Except this order be keeped, a man cannot warrantably, and with confidence and comfort, make application of these covenants. Hence it followeth, that it is a prepostrous and perilous course which some do follow, and presse others to follow, that presently upon the hearing of the Gospel, every man should believe, that Christ hath died for him: for, Christ calleth no man, warrandeth no man to come to him, except he, first, do acknowledge his sins, and himself to be worthy of wrath, condemnation and hell for his sins, and to be utterly unable to save himself by any mean, save by Christ: for, (*Luke*, 5. 32.) Christ saith, *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners unto repentance.* Neither doth Christ require of any man, to believe himself to be of the number of Christs sheep for whom he laid down his life, except he come by faith as a lost sinner to him, and submit himself to his doctrine and discipline, and pastorall care over him: for, (*Joh.* 17. 9.) Christ saith, *I pray not for the world, but for these thou hast given me out of the world:* and no man shall know, that himself is given of the Father to Christ, till first he come in the order foresaid unto Christ, and when he is come to Christ, resolveth to abide with him, then may he say, the Father hath given me to Christ, and drawn me to Christ: for, this is the mark which Christ giveth, *Joh. 6. 37. All that the Father hath given unto me, shall come to me.* And again, vers. 44. *No man cometh unto me, except the Father draw him.*

3. There

3. There is an order also to be observed in the application of the graces offered in the Gospel; for, in the Evangel, first, Christ himself is offered, as the only and sufficient remedy against sin and misery; and next, unto the person that receiveth Christ heartily, all Christs benefits are promised to come to him by Christ, and are to be found in and through Christ, such as are Justification, Adoption, the indwelling of the holy Ghost, love, joy, peace, gentleness, bountv, fidelity, meekness, temperance and other Christian graces, *Gal* 5. 22. for, no man hath right unto Christs benefits, before he be a believer in Christ. But so soon as a man, in the foresaid order, is fled unto Christ, and hath laid hold on him by faith, straight way a door and entresse is opened unto him unto the rich treasure of grace, and right is given to him unto all the benefits of Christ; for, all the promises are yea and amen, not before a man come to Christ, not to a man without Christ, but they are all yea and amen in Christ.

4. Therefore they wrong both God and their own selves, who when they come unto the throne of grace, do prescribe unto God another order of working, then he hath set down in his word, craving, in the first place, consolation and sensible peace in their conscience, felt in their hearts; and that God would work some such saving graces in their heart, which the reprobat cannot counterfit: which directions, if God will take off their hand, and bestow his graces on them sensibly as they prescribe unto him, then they will stand oblieged to continue in the faith of Christ; but if they find not their directions obeyed, and their petitions in their order granted, then with grief of heart they begin to complain, and to pretend that they dare not approach unto God or Christ, so long as these petitions are not first granted and felt to be granted.

This temptation doth invert and overturn the order of Gods calling: for, Christ doth not call unto him well-doers, or these that do found their faith upon their

their own good behaviour, and lean to their own works, which they desire to find in themselves, before they fasten faith on Christ; but Christ doth call sinners in their own sense and acknowledgment, who renounce all confidence in their own works, past, present or to come; He calleth such as are lost in their own sense, and do feel themselves utterly unable so much as to think a good thought of themselves, that they may be cloathed with the imputed righteousnesse of Christ, and indued with the spirit of sanctification by him; and Christs will is, that they who believe in him, abide in him, and suck by faith out of him (as the branches do suck sap out of the tree) grace to bring forth fruits more and more abundantly: for, this is the order which Christ doth prescribe unto his disciples, *Joh.* 15. 5. *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for, without me ye can do nothing.* Whosoever therefore will not believe in Christ, or do think it is not lawfull to approach unto him, till first they find in themselves amendment of life and evident fruits of saving faith, they do in effect change the condition of the covenant of grace, and do suspend their faith in Christ till they find works to build upon, when it were their duty, the more they feel their barrennesse, so much the more straitly to lay hold on Christ and hold him fast, and ply him with earnest supplications to make good his promise to them who do abide in him, *Joh.* 15. 5.

5. It is necessary to presse every man, who doth believe his justification by faith, that he be carefull to observe the morall law, or ten commands, as the perpetuall and unchangeable rule of good works prescribed of God: for, *Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, Matth.* 5. 17. He hath indeed unto believers in him, dissolved the *covenant* of the law, not only by his doctrine, teaching them, that by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God, because by the law, is the knowledge of sin gotten, but no absolution

ſolution from ſin, *Rom.* 3. 20. But alſo by *abſolving* every believer in him, that walketh not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit, from all condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 1. Mean while he hath not broken the yoke of *obedience* of the law from off the believer, as he hath broken off the yoke of the *covenant* of works; but by the contrair, he preſcribes to them who come unto him for remiſſion of ſin, that they take on his yoke upon them, and bring forth works of new obedience, *Matth.* 11. 29. and this is the order which the Apoſtle doth preſcribe, *Tit.* 3. 8. *This is a faithfull ſaying, and theſe things I will thou affirm conſtantly, that they which have believed in God, might be carefull to maintain good works: theſe things are good and profitable unto men.*

6. The moral precepts of the law are ſo to be preſſed, that the hearers, whether un-converted or converted, may, by them, whether in ſome meaſure obeyed or diſobeyed, be driven to Chriſt, that the law may ever, in ſome ſort, be a pedagogue unto Chriſt: for, before converſion, ſin muſt be made manifeſt by the law, and the merit of ſin committed, muſt be ſhown forth, that the man to be converted may ſee himſelf in a loſt condition, and that he muſt certainly periſh, except he flee for refuge to Chriſt the Redeemer, that by him he may have remiſſion of ſin.

And after a mans converſion, the believer muſt, by the precepts of the law, be convinced of his duty and inability to perform obedience, except, by grace, power be communicated unto him from Chriſt both to will and to do. And when he hath gotten grace to give obedience in ſome meaſure, yet muſt he examine his beſt works by the rule of the commands, and acknowledge the imperfection of his ſervice, that he may be more and more humbled in himſelf, and glory only in the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and withall give unto Chriſt the glory of any good thing which he hath in any meaſure done well.

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7. The threatnings also all of them, must so be applyed in general, as both converted and un-converted may be forced to run to Christ, who only can deliver the un-converted from guiltiness and wrath, and death eternal deserved by sin; and who only can deliver those who are converted from the deserved punishment of their sins, and from the execution of the sentence which the law pronounceth; and who only can make them eshew and hold off the way which God hath cursed.

And it is easie to judge how much cause of humiliation the godly shall have, by daily comparing their actings with the law, and how dear and precious Christ must be to them, who giveth unto them, as many deliverances from death, as they commit sins, and do fail of their oblieged obedience to God.

8. A sinner already convicted of sin and impenitency, and hardness of his own heart, and who is grieved for the same, must not be skarred nor deterred from going unto Christ, till first he attain such a prescribed measure of contrition as he conceiveth his sins do call for; which measure, un-skilfull Physicians do rigidly exact of sinners, who are desirous of repentance, pretending for their rigidity, their fear, lest if such sinners should be so easily admitted unto Christ, the work of repentance should be marred in them, and presumption should have way and be fostered in them: this fear is needless, because it belongs to Christ alone to give repentance, and he came to call sinners (convicted of sin and destitute of repentance in their own estimation and sense) unto repentance, that he may give them repentance. We grant that there is a danger, lest a sinner, lightly touched with the sting of the conscience, do not well weigh the weight of his sin and the merit of it, and that he go to Christ with his lips only when his heart is far from him; but, on the other hand, there is no less hazard, lest he who is destitute of repentance in his own sense, and not permitted to go to Christ to have it, may either be driven to dispair, or conceive, that by his

his own pains on his own heart, repentance must be wrought before he go to Christ, *Whom God hath exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto* Israel *and remission of sins*, Act. 5. 31.

We must be wary therefore, lest a burdened conscience in any measure, being excluded from going to Christ till he be in such and such a measure humbled, set himself so upon bodily exercise of ordinances, without daring to go to Christ, as that he put some merit in effect, upon his bodily exercise which he useth, to bring himself unto contrition, or else turn desperatly careless, and leave off all using of means.

We need not fear, that instantly upon a sinners coming to Christ, he shall find too soon consolation, and so not be humbled as need were: for, Christ is only wise, and can prudently deal with the sinner coming unto him; he hath eye-salve to give his proud merchant, to let him see his blindness, poverty and misery, as well as gold and garments to the poor and naked: but if any be proud and rich in their own conceit, and approach toward him without sense of sin, he can suspend them from comfort, till first he rebuke and chasten them, and keep them off from felt access a while, till they be truly humbled, and thirst in earnest after pardon and imputed righteousness.

9. As the narrow way to the kingdom of heaven must not be made straiter then God hath made it, So neither must the way be made broader then God hath made it, and reignies loosed to mens lusts, as if believers sins were either none, or but light ones: for, God is not a favourer of sin, and whosoever do turn the grace of God into wantonness, undoubtedly they are ignorant both of the Law and of the Gospel. Wherefore the Law and the Gospel must be so tempered, that on the one hand, none who would be at Christ, and through him at mortification of their sinfull nature, be discouraged; and on the other hand, that no man, boasting of his profession of faith, be strengthened in his iniquity:

for,

for, this is the true ſenſe and intent of God, both in his threatnings and promiſes, that none deſpair, hearing threatnings, but repent and live; and that none preſume to ſin, upon hearing his gracious promiſes, but walk in fear before him, *Ezek.* 33. 10, 11, 12. to v. 20. and Chriſt doth blot out from the number of the ſaved, all them who break off and make void any of the precepts, and do teach men ſo to do, *Matth.* 5. 19.

10. Becauſe God doth make uſe of the ſame arguments in his Word, both for moral ſwaſion and for effectual operation of ſaving faith, and bringing forth fruits of new obedience; therefore the force of God's arguments and inducements (as occaſion is offered) muſt ſo be opened up, and ſharpned and preſſed, that the hearers, being ſoundly convinced of the holineſs, equity verity and neceſſity of the Lords commands, may at leaſt be morally perſwaded to yield unto them. And to this end, that hearers muſt be exhorted, that they call to mind and weigh ſuch and ſuch arguments unto duties, that by reaſoning with themſelves, they may prevail by Gods bleſſing to believe the Word of God; So did *Paul*, directing his ſpeech to the governour *Felix*, braſh the caſtle of his conſcience with this engine, that he near-by took it in, *Act.* 24. 25. and ſo did he deal with *Agrippa*, whom he near-by perſwaded to become a Chriſtian, *Act.* 26. 28. and this was his endeavour to perſwade all his hearers to believe the truth he taught, 2 Cor. 5. 11. *Knowing therefore* (ſaith he) *the terror of the Lord, we perſwade men.* And the ſame Apoſtle hath taught all Chriſts diſciples to exerciſe the faculty of reaſoning, in the mater of ſtrengthening their faith and purpoſe of obedience, that having ſet before them the arguments which the Word of God doth furniſh, they may ſum up the truth in concluſions drawn there-from, and by holy reaſoning, tye themſelves to believe and obey the Word of God, *Rom.* 6. 11. *Likewayes* (ſaith he) by reaſoning, *reckon ye your ſelves to be dead unto ſin, but alive unto God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* And giveth an example

example of this reasoning, 2 Cor. 5. 14. 15. *The love of God constraineth us, because we thus judge, &c.*

11. Because the Lord divers wayes, according to his own wisdom, exerciseth men, that sometime by his long-suffering patience he leads them unto repentance, sometime also by his word and rods, he doth drive them thereunto; therefore let the use of all exercises, all temptations and afflictions, and the use of all benefits and divine dispensations of providence, be carefully made use of, that men may so look upon Gods bounty and long-suffering on the one hand, and upon their own sins and ill deservings on the other hand, as they may be led and constrained in love to seek after so gracious a God, and to flee for refuge unto Christ, mourning for their provoking of justice so oft against themselves; and in whatsoever condition, of prosperity or adversity, to submit themselves to God, however he shall be pleased to dispose of them.

12. The doctrine of reprobation must not be determinatly applyed to any particular person, how wicked soever he shall for the present appear; neither must the suspicion which any man may have of his own reprobation be fostered, because particular reprobation of this or that person, is among the secrets of the Lord, not to be medled with, whereof a man may not give out sentence before the Lord hath revealed his own decree. But on the contrair, all the hearers must be warned and pressed to be wary to entertain any hostile thought of God, or to foster suspicions of him, as implacable, but rather think of him as their faithfull Creator; just indeed, yet mercifull, long-suffering and bountifull, both to the kind and the un-kind, as they shall find, if they will seek him: for, Sathan will press this temptation hard enough, and foster the suspicion which he hath suggested against God, in the minds of them whom God hath afflicted, albeit he get no assistance by any imprudent and un-just application of the Lords Word, unto this or that particular person to conclude their reprobation.

13. The

13. The ſcope of all doctrine muſt be this, that ſinners may be humbled in the ſenſe of their unrighteouſneſſe, indigence, infirmity and unworthineſſe; and being humbled, may be led unto Chriſt, believe in him, and be more and more glued unto him, and grow in the love of him, and reſt their ſouls upon him, as God, one with the Father and holy Spirit, worſhiping him in ſpirit and truth, endeavouring according to their vocation to advance his Kingdom in themſelves and others. And to this end, let neither on the one hand his incarnation, nor humiliation in the dayes of his fleſh, wherein he was in paying the promiſed price of our Redemption, derogat any thing to the eſtimation of his perſon, who is one God with the Father and holy Spirit, God over all bleſſed for ever; Nor on the other hand, his Majeſty make ſinners ſtand off, or be afraid to make their adreſſe to him; but, by the contrair, that the perſonall union of the divine and humane nature in him, and his cloathing himſelf with the offices of Prophet, Prieſt and King, may allure all ſinners, who hear of him, to come to him as *Mediatour*, who will not deal with them who come unto him as a judge againſt them, but as an advocat, Surety, and interceſſor for them, *and who will ſave to the uttermoſt every one that come unto God through him*, Heb. 7. 25.

14. For tryall of a mans regeneration and coming rightly to Chriſt, and growing in grace, the exerciſe of theſe three duties are neceſſarily required, to wit,

1. The exerciſe of repentance, or the entertaining in himſelf of the ſenſe of his naturall ſinfulneſſe and infirmity to do good, and of the power of inherent corruptions, whereby he may be made more and more to renounce all confidence in himſelf, and walk humbly before God.

2. The exerciſe of faith, or the daily renewed imploying of Chriſt for grace, and actuall help in all things, as his caſe requireth.

3. The exercise of love, or the endeavour of new obedience, flowing from love to God and his neighbour, through Christ.

CHAP. IX.

Of the more speciall application of divine covenants, for removing the impediments of regeneration.

WE have spoken of the prudent application of divine covenants in generall, it followeth that we speak of the curing of the sicknesses of the conscience concerning regeneration more specially. Some of these sicknesses, do tend to hinder regeneration, that it be not wrought at all, whereof we shall speak God willing in the rest of this first book. Other sicknesses, do tend to obscure the work of regeneration begun, and to foster questions in the regenerat man and make him doubt whether he be regenerat or not? or whether he be in the state of grace or not? and of these we shall speak somewhat in the second book. And last of all, some cases and sicknesses of the conscience, do tend toward the deceiving of the regenerat man about his present condition, wherein he is, without calling his state in question at the first, and of these we shall speak in the third book.

2. As for the first sort, these cases which impede and altogether marr regeneration, cannot easily be numbered, because of the multitude of deceits, whereby the unregenerat are deluded; but it shall suffice for our purpose, to name some of them only for examples cause; in handling whereof the way of curing other like cases may be observed.

In handling of these cases, it is not to be expected we should follow any exact method, or accurat distinction of one case from another; partly, because many faults may be variously interwoven one with another; partly, because in all these cases, the same faults are found after divers wayes to put forth their poyson. We therefore, that we may follow the easiest course, shal

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divide all unregenerat men, impeding their own regeneration, in three ranks. The first rank shall be of those who shew so far as they can all examination of their own conscience, least it should pronounce sentence of their state and disquiet them. The second rank shall be of those who do judge themselves indeed according to the law of God, but after examination do despair of any remedy. The third rank shall be of those, who make a slight examination of themselves, and upon some slight pretence give out sentence of absolution of themselves which God will not allow.

3. As to the first rank, to wit, of those that shew all examination of their own conscience, we shall name only seven sicknesses, or impediments hindering their self-examination and passing sentence on themselves. The first is *gross ignorance* of their naturall sin and misery, and of deliverance to be had through Christ, and of the duty required of them that are delivered by Christ. The second is *a false religion*, or damnable errour in judgment about the maters of salvation, and Gods worship: In which errour, so long as a sinner doth lye, he cannot be humbled for the damnable course he is in, or put question about his way. The third is *dissembled unbelief* and atheism, covered over with gross hypocrisie, which under hand doth reject the rule of examination. The fourth is *the brutish stupidity* of the cauterized conscience. The fifth is *a vain pretense of fear* to examine themselves, least it drive them to desperation. The sixth is *a lazy delaying* of examination from day to day. The seventh is *immoderat care* for things of this life.

4. Concerning all these impediments hindering self-examination, these three things are observable in general, 1. albeit all or some of these evils may fall upon the reprobat, yet are they not their proper maladies; for, some of the elect before their regeneration, may lye for a time under one or moe of these evils. Wherefore the Pastor, hoping the best of all, because he

knoweth not the marks of reprobation, must deal with all his hearers to guard them against all these evils; that the elect, whom God willl bless with the faith and obedience of his commands, may be saved.

Secondly, we must distinguish between a voluntary examination of the conscience, whereunto the godly do in their best condition set themselves daily, and a forced examination and wakning up of the conscience whether the sinner will or not. This sort of examination, may come either by preaching of the Word, an example whereof we have in *Felix* the Governour, who at the hearing *Pauls* discourse of vertues and vices, fell a trembling, *Act.* 24. 25. Or this wakening of the conscience may come by affliction, whereof we have an example of *Joseph's* brethren, whose consciences did lye sleeping securely under the guilt of distressing their brother *Joseph*, but by affliction at length were wakened, *Gen.* 42. 21. The Pastors part here is, not only to exhort men to a voluntair examination of themselves, but also by the sword of the spirit, must labour to open the apostums of proud sinners, discovering unto them, as occasion serveth, their wickedness, and denouncing the wrath of God against them, if possibly the Lord shall give them repentance, as he did to the hearers of *Peter*, Act. 2. 37.

Thirdly, let not a Preacher be too sollicit and anxious about the success of his labours, when he hath to do with obstinat sinners, whose consciences cannot be wakened, neither by challenges nor threatnings, nor exhortations: But after he hath used means publickly and privately, let him commit the mater unto God, who will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. It may suffice him, that all Christs sheep will at length hear his voice. Only let not the Pastor despair utterly of any man, but even toward those that are excommunicat, let him follow such a course as may reduce them unto repentance. as the Apostle giveth direction, 2 *Thess.* 3, 14, 15.

For

For removing of the first impediment of self-examination.

BUt that we may speak more particularly of the cure of these seven evil diseases, for removing of the first impediment, to wit, *gross ignorance*; it is not needfull to say much of catechetick instruction: seing in all Churches, it is presupposed there is some form of a Catechise, wherein the rudiments of saving knowledge are set down, by way of question and answer, for the use of children, and of the ruder sort come to years. Only, we offer to those that intend the holy ministery, this overture, for disposing and preparing people, for a more easie up-taking of some formed Catechise: Because most part of formed Catechises, are somewhat larger then they can be read at one time, or being read can be explicat any other way then by parcels, so many questions and answers at one time, and so many at another time, which how hardly it can be all explicat to the whole congregation, in a long time, experience may bear witness; therefore it may serve to good purpose, if so many of the ruder and ignorant sort, as may well be gathered together into one place at one time, the Pastor should profess before them all, that he purposeth to hold forth unto them a short sum of saving doctrine in six or seven heads of doctrine, so that in the space of an hour or thereby, before they dissolve their meeting, they may, if they be attentive and willing to learn, have some measure of sound light and understanding of the grounds of true religion.

After which preface used, let him so shortly or plainly as he is able, speak something, first, of the creation of the world by God the Father, God the Son, and God the holy Ghost, the only one true God in three persons; and something also of the creation of *Adam* and *Eve* our first parents, according to Gods Image, in wisdom, holiness and happiness; and something of the covenant of works made between God and them, including their posterity, the summe of which

covenant is this, Do this and live, but if thou ſin, thou ſhalt die.

Secondly, let him ſpeak ſomewhat of the breach of the covenant of works by our firſt parents, in whoſe loynes we are all made guilty of death according to the tenor of that covenant.

Thirdly, let him ſpeak of the remedy provided in the counſell of God, before time, but revealed timouſly after the fall of our firſt parents, to wit, the covenant of Redemption, between God and God the Son deſigned Mediatour, Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, the ſum whereof is, *Gen. 3. 15. the ſeed of the woman ſhall tread down the head of the ſerpent*, &c. That is to ſay, it is agreed in the counſell of God, that the ſecond perſon ſhall be born of a woman, and ſuffer for the ſins of the elect, and deſtroy ſin and death, the works of the devil.

Fourthly, let him ſpeak of the covenant of grace and reconciliation between God and believers in Chriſt, the ſumme whereof is this, whoſoever do acknowledge their ſin and flye to Jeſus Chriſt for relief from ſin and wrath, ſhall not periſh, but have eternall life.

Fifthly, let him ſpeak of the two ſeals of this covenant, to wit, Baptiſme and the Lords Supper, whereby the covenant, with the benefits held out therein to all believers, is ſealed.

Sixthly, let him ſpeak of the neceſſity of amendment of life and bringing forth of good works for glorifying God, and probation of the ſincerity of their faith.

Laſt of all, let him ſpeak of the day of Judgment when Chriſt ſhall come in the clouds, and perfect to all his elect and believers in him, all his promiſes of righteouſneſs and eternal life, and caſt all the wicked and unreconciled into the fire of hell. The ſame courſe may be taken with ruder ignorants in private, whoſe conſcience is wakened with terrour. After that about the ſpace of an hour the Paſtor hath ſpoken to all theſe heads ſhortly, and repeated again, and inculcat at ſome other few meetings, till the people have ſome-

what

what understood the busines, then he may draw forth these seven heads in some few questions, taking answer of the people in their own words as they have conceived the purpose.

These grounds being laid, the Pastor shall find by Gods blessing some desire and appetite raised in the people after more knowledge of these grounds, and hope put in them to overtake a formed Catechise, and to have it by heart as may be: To which end, the people must be encouraged by promises on the one hand, and stirred up by threatenings on the other hand, such as are, *Job.* 17. 3. and, 2 *Thess.* 1. 7, 8. and other like places.

Now when the people or any ignorant before, is begun to understand these seven grounds, they must be pressed to make use thereof; and that, 1. they should acknowledge their sins and deserved judgment, according to the covenant of works, which curseth every sinner for every sin. 2. That they should flye for refuge to Christ according to the covenant of grace. And, 3. that every one who is fled to Christ for grace and mercy, must take on his yoke and endeavour new obedience of his holy commands, by his grace and furniture.

For removing of the second impediment.

THe second impediment of self-examination, which is an unrenewed mans infection with some deadly errour in religion, and this is not easily removed: for, the conscience that is deceived by errour, absolveth the sinner from the crime, whereof the errour maketh him guilty, how grievous soever it be, and therefore so long as he lyeth in the errour, he securely contemneth all accusations and threatenings for his errour and erroneous practice, till he be convinced of his errour. And usually four causes do concur to obdure him in his errour. The first is the cunningnes and malice of the devil, who when he cannot altogether obscure and

ſuppreſs all the articles of ſaving doctrine, nor baniſh the Scripture out of the world, he uſeth by his emiſſaries (of old deſtinat to this damnation) to ſpread doctrines of devils in the viſible Church, whereby ſo far as he can he may detain men in their ſins.

The ſecond cauſe is, the wiſdom of the fleſh, which is enimity to God, and therefore very bent to defend every luſt whereunto men are inclined, and to fight againſt the truth of God contrair to their luſts.

The third cauſe is, the multitude of theſe who conſent with the pervetted conſcience, and avouch the ſame errour.

The fourth is, the righteous judgment of God, who upon ſuch as receive not the truth in love, ſendeth powerfull deluſions, and efficacy of errour, that they may beleeve a lye, and ſo be damned, who have not received the truth in love, but have pleaſure in unrighteouſneſſe.

2. But becauſe the Paſtor cannot know any mans reprobation in particular, and therefore muſt take the beſt courſe he can for every mans ſalvation, who is under his charge, if the erroneous perſon cannot be content to fall upon Chriſtian conference, in private with the Paſtor, it ſeemeth not expedient to fall flat at the firſt upon the errour wherewith he is infected, but to hold upon agreed unto principles, and from theſe grounds, lay open the merit of theſe ſins, whereof the erroneous party will grant himſelf no leſſe guilty, then other men will be found to be, and labour to convince him that for theſe common ſins, no ranſom can ſatisfie Gods juſtice ſave the perfect obedience which Chriſt gave to the Father, even to the death of the croſſe, in name of all that flee unto him for the benefit of Redemption. If the erroneous party can condeſcend to caſt himſelf wholly on Chriſts mercy, offered in the Goſpel for pardon of acknowledged ſin, then at another time the conference may be further followed, and the danger of the errour may be laid out before the erroneous

roneous, and he no more urged for the time, but that he would conſider what hath been told him, and that he would by prayer for Chriſts cauſe, beg light from God in the point queſtioned; And ſo go on with him in all meekneſſe and evidence of love to his ſoul, as the Lord openeth a door for uſing of all means that may reclaim the party erroneous.

3. But if the errour be likely to infect the flock, let the Paſtor openly refute the errour or hereſie, and that not only by hinting at ſome arguments againſt it, but of ſet purpoſe once at leaſt, ſolidly ſhewing how contrair it is to the word of God, and what are the fearfull conſequences thereof, that it may become in the ſight of the judicious, no leſſe vile and odious then groſs tranſgreſſions againſt the ſecond table of the law; which ſort of ſins is more hated of naturall reaſonable men, then ſins againſt the firſt table: for, nature's light is ſharper ſighted in the mutual duties of man to man, then in the maters of God and Religion, wherein a man hath no light at all in ſpeciall, ſave that which is by revelation of Scripture. The true intent and meaning whereof, if a man be ignorant of it, or ſhall miſtake it, the conſcience runneth headlong (without the leaſt ſecret check) after the errour and darkneſs which men naturally love more then truth and light.

For removing the third impediment.

THe third impediment of ſelf-examination, to wit, infidelity, diſſembled and covered with groſſe hypocriſie, whereof the man himſelf is conſcious, and ſtudieth to hide, and delighteth himſelf in his cheating of others, of all evils is moſt hardly cured: Of this ſort of hypocrits are they, who think they can give a reaſon of all their wayes to any man. And becauſe they reſpect the laws of the kingdom, wherein they live, more then the Scripture, therefore they cover over all their avarice and cruelty with practice of law, that beholders, think what they pleaſe, can ſay nothing againſt their following of the civil law: for, ſuch men fear

fear not God, and are not afraid for his judgment. And albeit they largely commend the piety of holy men, before ſome auditors to whom they conceive their ſpeach will be plauſible, yet under hand, and among ſuch as themſelves are, they do but laugh and ſcorn all ſuch piety, as puts men in hazard of any worldly inconvenience: for, in thoſe mens eyes the ſimplicity of the godly is fooliſhneſſe, and their faith in God, in their eſtimation, is madneſſe, eſpecially if for defence of the truth of Religion they ſuffer perſecution. Theſe hypocrits the Pſalmiſt calleth *unwiſe* and *fooliſh*, Pſal. 14. 1. *The fool hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God*; and, verſ. 6. *You have ſhamed the counſell of the poor, becauſe the Lord is his refuge.* Such men as theſe, albeit they faign themſelves to be holy, yet in heart they are haters of all true ſaints, in whom the ſparks of grace and ſolid Religion doth appear: for, ſo ſaith the Lord of them, *Pſal.* 14. 4. *They eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord.* They have a form of godlineſſe, but in their deeds they deny the power of it; for, they beleeve never a word of what is preached of things ſpirituall, revealed in the word of God: No wonder therefore that they will not examine themſelves, nor receive any accuſation from their own conſciences for any ſin of this ſort, which concerneth godlineſſe.

2. The cauſes of ſuch mens hardening of their heart, may be four; the firſt is, the meaſure of worldly wiſdom granted to them and others like themſelves, above common people, with the conceit whereof they are ſo puffed up, that they care for nothing ſave this preſent world, they acknowledge no other holineſſe, but civil obſervance of humane laws, as if Scripture and all Religious exerciſes were to be referred to this only end, that men, living according to the laws and cuſtomes received, into the Societies they live into, ſhould ſtudy to make the beſt they can of this preſent world. And this worldly and carnall wiſdom, is called, *Pſal.* 1. *the*

counſell

counſell of the ungodly, becauſe all ungodly perſons do think it ſhall be more ſafe to walk in the wayes of their wiſdom, then to be hemmed in by the laws of God.

The ſecond cauſe of their obduration, is carnall confidence in their worldly proſperity, which they hope alwayes to enjoy, and that by the principles of their own wiſdom, *Pſal.* 10. 6. *he hath ſaid in his heart, I ſhall never be moved, I ſhall never be in adverſity.*

The third cauſe, is the ſtumbling block of the croſs and affliction, wherewith they perceive the godly uſually to be exerciſed. Upon which offence they ſtumble the more readily becauſe they judge, that the greateſt part of the affliction of the godly proceeds from their own imprudency, and do aſcribe their own proſperity to their own wiſdom, wherein they are ſo lifted up in their own eſtimation, that they deſpiſe all men in compariſon of themſelves, *Pſal.* 10. 5. *As for his enemies, he puffeth at them.*

The fourth cauſe is, the not obſerving, the ſlighting and deſpiſing of Gods Judgments, concerning which they do not give credit unto God when he ſpeaketh, and therefore do not make uſe of the operation of his hands, *Pſal.* 10. 5. *Thy judgments are far above out of his ſight.*

3. Albeit there be very ſmall hope of the converſion of any ſuch, becauſe they cannot abide free dealing from any man in private, for to give them any admonition, is to them a reproach, and they cannot endure it, and nothing can cut them at the heart more then that any man ſhould ſuſpect them of hypocriſie and atheiſm; yet becauſe no Paſtor may deſpair of any man or judge him a reprobat, ſo long as the long-ſuffering patience of God inviteth him to repentance, therefore the Paſtor muſt deal with ſuch men in the general in his ſermons, that from the Scripture he may convince them of their ignorance of Gods wayes and of their atheiſm.

To which end and purpoſe, firſt, he muſt point ſuch men forth in their colours as the Scripture doth deſcribe

describe them, yet so as he hold himself in general in dealing with all such persons without particular description of any man by particular circumstances, whereby such a man one or moe of the auditors may appear to be picked out and shot at.

Secondly, he must denounce gravely and with compassion the heavy Judgments of God against them.

Thirdly, he must pull the mask of civil honesty off their face, and let them know the righteousnes of Christ imputed to humble sinners flying to him, to be the only garment to hide nakedness, if possibly the hearer may conceive hope he may be forgiven his former hypocrisie, and be allured unto Christ.

Fourthly, let him often against such persons make use of the Apostles admonition, 1 Cor. 3. 18, 19. *Let no man deceive himself, if any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for, it is written, he taketh the wise in their own craftinesse.*

Fifthly, let the Pastor observe the occasion, if at any time it shall please God to lay calamity on such a man; and then let him wisely labour with all meekness and tenderness to awaken up his conscience to take notice of the sparks of wrath, least he perish in Gods displeasure, if he do not humble himself before God and draw in to Christ; upon which condition let him make the fairest offers of grace and mercy that the Gospel can yield to him, if possibly the Lord may give him repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

For removing the fourth impediment.

THe fourth impediment of self-examination, is the stupidity and sensleſnes of the conscience, past feeling, as it were, burnt with a hot iron. This disease may be seen in besotted Epicures, given to their brutish lusts, who are so carried on after their furious beastly affections, that they have no more power over themselves

themſelves then beaſts, and ſuch monſters of men by frequent ſinning have extinguiſhed all ſenſe of ſin; for, albeit by nature there is ſome remainder of light in fallen man, whereby the work of the law may be found written in their heart, as far as to make them inexcuſable, when they do contrary to it; and albeit there is left in the natural man ſome natural power of the conſcience to vex him that rebelleth againſt it, to reſtrain him thereafter from doing the like, yet ſome have ſo ſold themſelves to the luſt and wantonneſſe of their fleſh, that they will not hear any admonition or check of the conſcience which might make any remorſe, but do run madly after all ſort of uncleanneſſe, corrupting themſelves as brute beaſts.

The like diſpoſition may be ſeen in openly profane perſons, who not only in their deeds have denyed the power of godlineſs, but alſo renounce the profeſſion of all form of godlineſſe, and ſhamelesly foam forth their ungodlineſſe, as an open rotten grave caſts forth the ſtink thereof. Of this ſort are theſe, who when they do blaſpheme, will not be reproved. *Pſal.* 12. 4. *Our tongues are our own, who is Lord over us?* and who as dogs do trample under-foot all holy things and rent them who reprove them, and who inſult over the godly in their affliction, ſaying with *Davids* enemies, *where is their God?* and who openly ſcorn all religion like theſe deſperat ſcoffers, 2 *Pet.* 3. 4. ſaying, *where is the promiſe of his coming.* Such as theſe are practically atheiſts, and in ſome ſort alſo in their minds; for, albeit they have ſome natural principles of a Godhead imprinted on them, yet they ſmother all knowledge of God and belch out their own ſhame againſt God and religion and all the godly.

2. Of mens falling unto ſuch a fearfull abomination, four cauſes may be rendered. The firſt is, the mans violence uſed againſt his conſcience frequently in committing of grievous ſins wittingly, and from the ſlighting of the admonitions of the conſcience ariſing

up

up to the contempt of all accusations which the conscience can lay in against him, and at last boldly rising up against the conscience, as it were, to be avenged of it, for rebukeing him, by committing these same sins most frequently, for which he hath been oftnest reproved by his conscience. The second cause may we reckon the devil, who thinketh it too little to allure men to sin, and harden their heart in it, and spoil them of all sense of their sin, except he also draw them to renounce God and bark against him, and become like the devil himself, so far as he can drive them. The third cause we make the holy justice of God, giving over the man who contemneth the light and checks of his conscience, unto a reprobat sense, that being deprived of common use of reason and judgment, he may run mad in his sin like the devil: for, if God did punish the heathen so for this sort of sinning, *Rom.* 1. 28. what wonder he punish, seven times more, them, who thus rebell against the light of holy Scripture? yea, these that do not come to this hight are punished, by giving them over to strong delusions, 2 *Thess.* 2. 11. The last, but sinless, cause, is the deep wisdom of God, who suffering such wretches to fill up such a measure of sin, doth make manifest to all beholders, the power and poyson of in-born sin in man, and draweth forth to light the natural enimity of man against God, the seeds whereof is in all men, and could hardly be believed to be incident to men, except it were by experience seen and found in some men.

For remedy of this evil, it is too little that such a monster should be driven from all Church-society, and given over to Sathan; it is the part of the Magistrate to bind beasts and mad devils, and punish them as it becometh the bearer of the sword to do for avenging of evil-doers. But, if the Magistrate do not his part, yet, let the Pastor do what in him lyeth; for, albeit the Scripture giveth small hope of the recovery of such vile monsters because of the stupidity of their conscience, that cannot be wrought upon by man, yet seing such

such evils have been found, even in some elect, as *Manasseh* and some of the Corinthians before their conversion, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10, 11. and because experience hath often found, that some of this sort going to publick execution by the Magistrate, have been converted and saved by faith in Jesus Christ; a Pastor should not altogether despair of such vile men, but essay what may be done by conference, especially when God sends calamity on them, or the Magistrate executs justice on them for any crime, if possibly such miscreants, being convinced of their perverseness, may repent and flye to Christ, the Redeemer of such as flye unto him.

For removing the fifth impediment.

1. THe fifth impediment of self-examination, is a false fear of no small danger to their souls, if they should ripe up their conscience for by-gones; for, seing they feel themselves quiet, they think it were unprofitable and dangerous to trouble their own peace. Such persons will tell you, that their faith is surely set on God, and that they never had any doubt or suspicion of Gods love to them, and therefore dare not trouble themselves with self-examination, first, because all Sermons bid them firmly trust in God. Secondly, because they know, if they should trouble themselves with self-examination, they might soon weaken their faith, as they conceive. Thirdly, because they know the subtilty of Sathan, as they say, to whom if a door were opened by search of their old wayes, they fear he should over-charge them with accusations, and drive them to desperation, as (say they) it hath befallen sundry, who after wakening their consciences, never rested till they put hand in themselves, not being able to bear the torment of their conscience.

There are other some, who, nill they will they, are drawn before the tribunal of Gods Judgment, and their conscience beginneth to stir against them, which so soon as they do perceive, incontinent they interrupt the

the proceſs. Such a one was the heathen Governour *Felix*, Act. 24. 25. who after hearing, for a little, *Pauls* diſcourſe of righteouſneſs, temperance and judgment to come, did tremble, and therefore deſired *Paul* to forbear for the time. Of this ſort alſo are they who do with-draw themſelves from Church-meetings, and hearing of publick Sermons, leſt they ſhould be troubled with the ſerious ſpeeches of a faithfull Paſtor. Some are alſo of this ſort, who take the courſe that King *Saul* did take, and call for a minſtrel, or for merry company to ſuppreſs the voice of their barking conſcience, or do by ſome ſuch way divert their conſcience from entering in judgment with them.

2. The cauſes of this evil in the un-regenerat man, may be found theſe four, (beſides others more particular) Firſt, ignorance of the duty of ſelf-examination preſcribed of God, *Pſ.* 4. 4. or a voluntar mis-kenning that ſuch a duty is required of all. The ſecond cauſe is a fixed purpoſe to go on ſecurely in their old wayes. The third cauſe is, the ſenſe of the ſweetneſs they imagine they do find, and have found of a long time in the carnal reſt and ſleep of their conſcience. The fourth cauſe is a perſwaſion, that they could not rid themſelves out of the grips of their conſcience, nor endure the blind blowes, which conſcience, ſet down on the tribunal, ſhould inflict on them; which ſorrow and vexation they conceive they cannot otherwayes eſchew, but by throwing down their conſcience from the bench that he enter in no proceſſe againſt them.

3. When the Paſtor hath to do with ſuch a man, his firſt care muſt be, that this blind fear may be drawn forth to the light, by ſhewing him, that this his flying from the light and hiding himſelf in darkneſs, is to no purpoſe, and that there is no place for him to flye unto and hide himſelf from God. Secondly, let him preſſe the decree of God, that all men muſt once die, and then come to judgment: wherein he cannot miſſe perpetual condemnation and endleſs torment from an angry

angry Judge; except he now judge and condemn himſelf, and flye to Chriſt the Mediator while it is to day, while Chriſt is exerciſing his Mediatory-office, and is inviting all ſinners to repent, and calling all weary and heavy loaden to come unto him. Thirdly, let the Paſtor ſhew to thoſe fearfull perſons, that this their fear is groundleſſe; for, if they minde to draw in to God, they need not fear to confeſſe all their ſins and flye to his grace, which if they do not, the ſleep which they love to lye into is deadly, becauſe God hath ſaid, *There is no peace to the wicked*, Iſa. 48. 21. Fourthly, let him preſſe the precepts for ſelf-examination and judging our ſelves, *Pſ.* 4. 4. and trying whether we be in the faith or not, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. except they would chuſe to be judged of God without mercy. But ſeing here we ſpeak to Paſtors, or to ſuch as aim at the holy Miniſtry, we need not inſiſt, but with the Apoſtle, 2 *Tim.* 2. 17. pray the Lord to give his ſervants wiſdom and prudence in all things.

For removing the ſixth impediment.

THe ſixth impediment is, a lazy and ſluggiſh putting off of the duty of ſelf-examination from time to time. And many are guilty of this ſinfull folly, who will grant, that it is a duty lying on them to ſet their conſcience on work for tryal of their ſtate or condition, but like ill debtors, who, promiſing to pay as oft as they meet with their creditors, do notwithſtanding put off time and delay the work from day to day; Such mens diſpoſition in ſpiritual things is well reſembled in the deſcription of the ſluggard, *Prov.* 6. 10. *How long wilt thou ſleep, O ſluggard? when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleep? Yet a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleep. So ſhall thy poverty come as one that travaileth, and thy want as an armed man.* And. *Prov.* 26. 14, 15, 16. *As the door turneth upon his hinges, ſo doth the ſlothfull man upon his bed. The ſlothfull hideth his hand in his boſom, it grieveth him to bring it again to*

his mouth. The ſluggard is wiſer in his own conceit, then ſeven men that can render a reaſon. Such are our lazy delayers of examination, of whom we ſpeak, they cannot endure to be at pains to ſearch their wayes or commune with their heart: But, ſo long as God ſuffereth their conſcience to ſleep, ſo long they put off the duty of ſearching themſelves and lye ſtill in ſecurity, eſteeming it a torture to have their ſluggiſh ſleeping any way interrupted by any perſon.

2. Of this evil diſeaſe, five cauſes may be given; The firſt is, the abhorring of all pains in ſpiritual duties, how profitable ſo ever diligence might prove. The ſecond cauſe is, the bewitching ſenſe of ſweetneſs they conceive they feel in this their idle carriage. The third is, the deceit of the ſluggards heart, ſtill promiſing to follow his purpoſe of amendment of life from day to day, and yet, albeit deceived a thouſand times, he doth give credit to his own falſe heart. The fourth is, a falſe opinion which the ſluggard entertains of his own ſpiritual abilities, as if he were ſure he could repent at any time; and that if any ſickneſs or appearance of death ſhould befall him, he would then undoubtedly make his reckoning with God and crave pardon, and ſo be ſaved, and in ſuch pleaſant dreams he counteth himſelf a much wiſer man then many who do put themſelves to daily toiling and vexation, by keeping their conſcience on the rack-ſtock, when with leſs miſery they might follow his ſluggiſh way of it. The fifth, but ſinleſſe, cauſe, is the Lords lengthening of proſperity to the ſluggard, which although it ſhould lead him to repentance, yet he becomes hereby more and more drunken, and lulleth himſelf over in a deeper ſleep.

3. This ſickneſs is not eaſily cured, except the Lord take up a rod and rouſe the ſluggard out of his ſleep. But, as for the Paſtors part, he ſhall do well in private if the ſluggard confeſſe his fault, and howſoever, to ſet an edge on the law in publick, that all ſuch ſluggards may apprehend the real danger their ſoul is into by delaying

laying their repentance, becauſe the indurance of this brittle and frail life is moſt uncertain; for, the fool knoweth not whether the very next following night after admonition is given to him, his ſoul ſhall be taken from him. Secondly, he muſt know, that the longer he delay, the number of his ſins and the hardneſſe of his heart, and the wrath of God againſt him, do daily grow to a higher meaſure. Let the ſluggard then be convinced of his madneſſe, if he ſhall delay for an hour, by acknowledgment of his ſin and flying to Chriſt, to vomit up the deadly poyſon of his ſweeteſt ſins, and to have the hot burning wrath of God againſt him extinguiſhed. Thirdly, let the deceits wherewith he beguileth himſelf be laid open and refuted, and an offer be made unto him, whether he will chuſe, that his conſcience be tormented for ever in the ſociety of unclean devils, after a ſhort while ſleep in ſin in this life, rather then while he hath time, while Chriſt offereth himſelf Mediator in his Goſpel, while he may have the ſweet fellowſhip of the Saints, he will chuſe to put his conſcience to it, and acknowledge his ſins and flye to Chriſt, that he may have peace with God and ſo be ſaved for ever.

For removing the ſeventh impediment.

THe ſeventh impediment of ſelf-examination, is the too earneſt care for earthly things, and the mans involving himſelf in the affairs of this life: for, there are many who do not refuſe the duty of trying their own ſpiritual ſtate and condition, who notwithſtanding of this conviction of their duty, do ſpend all their time in the buſineſſes of this world, wherein they are ſo involved and carried head-long, that they paſſe perfunctoriouſly all exerciſes of religion, and do neither wait for the direction of Gods Word, or of their own conſcience, about what they have to do, nor call themſelves to account for what is paſt, done or not done. Of this ſort are theſe, of whom Chriſt doth ſpeak, *Luke* 14. 18. who being invited to a free ſupper, anſwered, ſome of

them, *I have bought land*, another, *I have married a wife*, another, *I have bought a yoke of oxen*, &c. and so sought to be excused, for their not coming to the marriage, all pretending their earthly affairs, as a just reason of their slipping of the invitation given them. Of this sort of men speaketh Christ, *Math.* 13. 22. *He that received seed among the thornes, is he that heareth the Word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches chock the word, and he becometh unfruitfull.* This sort of men are complained of, *Jer.* 8. 6. *I hearkened and heard, but they spoke not aright, no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done? Every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battel.*

2. Of this evil, four causes among others may be given, first, inordinat concupiscence of earthly things, which eateth up all the time and travell, which the love of things spiritual doth call for, and, as it were, spurreth the man to the immoderat pursuing of things temporal. The second cause is, the beguiling of the conscience under the pretense of seeking what is lawfull and necessary for a mans well-being in this life, as if a mans spending of his care and pains, and time in earthly business, in it self lawfull, were sufficient excuse for neglecting things spiritual and heavenly; or, as if it were not required of all men that hear the Word of God pointing out the way of mens salvation, to prefer that one thing necessary before all commodities of this earth; for, *what can it avail a man to gain the whole earth, if he lose his own soul?* The third cause is, the deceitfulnesse of riches, which every man naturally is inclined to pursue too eagerly, and which many pragmatick busie men do attain: for, God useth to recompence every mans diligence in a lawfull occupation with a sort of external reward of the same kind with his work: This success and rewarding of mens industry and pains, by increasing busie mens riches, earthly-minded men, do interpret to be the speciall blessing of God, and an approbation of their immoderat

rat pursuing after things earthly, wherein they are much mistaken; for God never ordained any mans civil calling to be a hinderance of the spiritual welfare of his soul, and if any man neglect his soul and pursue worldly riches, if he obtain them, what can be said? but *verily he hath his reward*, and cannot look after the fruit of pains taking in spiritual matters which he neglected. The fourth cause is, a light estimation of the Word of God, and of maters concerning salvation which by reason they fall not under sense and present possession, but are offered to us in promises, and are not bestowed for the present, therefore many are lesse carefull for things promised after this life, and do follow the more eagerly after such things whereof they can take hold in this life.

3. The way to cure this malady, so far as pertaineth to a Pastor, is, that both in publick sermons and privat conferences, he give unto things lawfull and to the following of a mans civil calling the own room and time, and wisely let men know the subordination of all civill affairs unto the welfare of their souls, and so to lay open the perill of mens souls, when they are following too too eagerly their civill vocation, as in the mean time he do not condemn mens diligence in their callings, but that he give directions for such a wise moderation of every mans care about things of this world, that the precious excellency of the soul, and the infinit worth of eternal life be first and above all earthly things provided for, and that in the using or conquesshing of riches no prejudice do come to his own salvation, which is not possible a man shall do, if he do not daily examine his own conscience carefully, and keep it in a tender disposition, resorting to Christ upon all occasions for pardon of daily sin and keeping him, that if riches increase, he may not set his heart thereon, but may be forth-coming to the duties of charity towards others as his power shall be, and opportunities shall be offered.

CHAP. X.

Concerning them that are like to despair.

WE have spoken of the first sort of them who do hinder their own regeneration by abhorring, declining, delaying and shifting off of the examination of their consciences. The second sort or rank of those who hinder their own conversion, is of such as after the wakening of their own consciences, whether voluntary or by compulsion, do despair of all remedy offered unto them in the Gospel of grace in Christ, and renouncing the counsell of God, do follow the counsell of Sathan and their own heart.

2. We distinguish a volountary examination of the conscience from a compelled and inforced examination thereof, as was hinted at in the former Section; for, it is one thing to say of a man, he hath voluntarily examined himself and found out his dittey and deserved judgment, and to say of him, he is forced to examine himself and in himself to receive sentence according as his wayes have been; for, there are many who will not judge themselves, yet after are forced unto it against their will: These are said to judge themselves voluntarily, who, by a free act of their will, do enter themselves to be judged of their own conscience, and do go about the work either slightly and perfunctoriously, or strictly and exactly according to their knowledge of the rule: But a compelled examination is ever more exact and strict and joyned with the chastisement of the sinner for neglecting or slighting or delaying of examination, *Psal.* 50. 21. This distinction is holden forth to us by the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31, 32. *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged: But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.* Both these sorts of examination have a blessing following upon them when Christ is fled unto after examination: but if Christ be not fled unto

unto, then desperation may follow upon both slight and serious examination, both upon voluntary and enforced examination.

3. We do not take *desperation* here for every diffidence of Gods performing of promises, or of Gods making good of his gracious offers, but for diffidence to obtain reconciliation with God, or to find mercy through Christ the Mediatour. Neither do we call by the name of *desperation* every diffidence to obtain mercy and reconciliation, cast in mans mind by the tempter Sathan, and yielded unto for a time under the sense of Gods wrath; for, at some fits, the diffidence will be found in renewed Saints, as in *Jonah*, chap. 2. 4. *Heman* the Ezrait. *Psal.* 88. 16. *David*, Psal. 116. 11. who seemed to themselves for the time to be cast off, but but did swim out of this deep by faith. Neither do we take *desperation* for every short or long eclipse of hope, wherein a distressed soul seems to its self to despair, yea, and may possibly utter and profess they do despair, and in the mean time will not renounce the use of the means, whereby they do get, or recover hope: Such was the condition of *Heman* the Ezraite, *Psal.* 88. 14, 15, 16. *Lord why casts thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me? I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up, while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted.* He thought he was cast off, yet for all that he went on daily praying for the sense of mercy and found it, and was directed by God to acquaint the Church unto all generations with his long and sad exercise. But we take *desperation* for a prevalent impression made by Sathan upon the spirit of a man, that God will not shew him mercy, and so fixed in him, as the man resolveth not to deal with God any more for mercy.

4. Of this properly called *desperation*, there are two sorts, one which we may call careless and secure desperation, another which we may call anxious and tormenting desperation. *Cains* desperation in his last resolution, was of the first sort, and *Judas* desperati-

on was of the other sort. We call that a careleſſe ſecure deſperation, when a ſinner, being convinced of his groſſe and many ſins, either believeth not Gods Word or conceiveth God implacable and irreconciliable, and to have deſtinate him to deſtruction according to the ſentence of the law, pronounced againſt ſuch ſinners as he knoweth himſelf to be, and ſo doth harden and obdure himſelf againſt all threatenings, and goeth on in his own wayes, reſolved to take eaſe and pleaſure in the world, ſo long as he liveth, and not to make himſelf miſerable before the time; Such was the deſperation of carnall Iſraelits, *Iſa.* 22. 13. who, hearing the threatenings of the Prophets concerning the juſt Judgments of God to come upon them, when they ſhould have humbled themſelves in prayer and faſting, in ſackcloth and aſhes, and ſought mercy from God, they did ſet themſelves to make good cheer, and to feaſt one another, ſaying, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall die.* Of this ſort were alſo theſe in *Ezekiels* time, *chap.* 33. 10. *Thus ye ſpeak*, ſaying, *If our ſins and tranſgreſſions be upon us, and we pine away in them, how ſhall we then live?* They do not deny that they are loadened with iniquity, they doubt nothing of the righteouſneſſe of the threatned Judgment; but, comparing the juſtice of Gods Judgment with their ſins, and laying aſide all thought of a remedy from Gods mercy, they flatly deſpair, as if there had been no remedy provided in the Word of God for them, or as if the threatenings had been pronounced, as ſentences pronounced abſolutely, without exception of their repentance.

5. The cauſes of this evil, are ſpecially theſe three; the firſt, is groſſe misbelief of Gods Word, contemning all threatenings, as but the words of an angry prophet ſtirred up to vent his paſſions againſt people. The ſecond, is the perverſeneſſe of corrupt nature, ſo hardened with the cuſtom of ſinning, that the conſcience not being terrified with Gods threatenings, is nothing moved

moved with inward accuſations, which they know to be juſt; whereupon they reſolve neither to ſeek for mercy, nor care for reconciliation with God, nor to ſhed with their carnal pleaſures and ſinfull luſts, but will go on in their own wayes, and take their hazard. The third, is a falſe perſwaſion, that it is impoſſible they can be reconciled to God, ariſing partly, from the vileneſs of their former life and groſſeneſs of their ſins, partly, from the ignorance of the Goſpel, and of the rich grace of God offered to the worſt of ſinners, who ſhall forſake their former wayes and flye unto Chriſt; and partly, ariſing from the ignorance of the ſcope and end of the law, which is appointed to be a pedagogue to lead and draw men unto Chriſt, after their conviction of ſin by the law, how grievous ſoever their ſins have been.

6. The remedy of this ſort of ſecure deſperation is very hard, and in ſome incurable, namely theſe, who do not believe the threatenings and go on ſtill in unbelief; or, do believe the threatenings, but are ſo wedded to their luſts, that they will not change their courſe and maner of ſinfull carriage, come what may come, but reſolve to eat and drink and be merry while they live: Concerning whom the Prophet *Iſaias* ſayeth, *chap.* 22. 14. *It was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hoſtes, ſurely this iniquity ſhall not be purged from you, till ye die, ſaith the Lord of hoſtes.* The beſt ground of hope is of ſuch, who, through ignorance of the end of the law and offer of the Goſpel, have taken up a falſe perſwaſion of their deſperat eſtate. Now becauſe the Paſtor hath no warrand to read the decree of any mans reprobation in particular, his care muſt be in private and publick, to waken epicures, and all beſotted in their ſins, out of their deadly ſleep; laying before them, from Scripture, the unextinguiſhable fire of hell, and the torments of the damned to be endured for ever by the impenitent and unbelieving ſinner on the one hand; and on the other hand, making offer of remiſſion

remiſſion of ſin and reconciliation to all who ſhall forſake their former vitious wayes, and be content to embrace Chriſt Jeſus for their righteouſneſſe, ſanctification and ſalvation. And to this end, let him certifie all his hearers, that threatenings are not intended of God to drive any man to deſperation, but to lead all to repentance, that they may be ſaved, and that the exception of repentance and faith in the Redeemer, is to be underſtood in every threatening, for ſo the Lord hath made a plain commentary upon all his threatenings and all his promiſes alſo, that he be not for ever miſtaken, which is this in ſumme, that by his threatenings he doth not intend to make any man to deſpair, but to repent and turn to God; and that by his promiſes he doth not intend, that any man ſhould preſume to ſin, or turn his grace into wantonneſſe, as is at large ſet down, *Ezek.* 33. from *ver.* 10. to *ver.* 21. and, *chap.* 18. from *ver.* 21. to the end.

Of anxious tormenting deſperation.

ANxious and tormenting deſperation is when a ſinner, from the apprehenſion of his guiltineſſe of irremiſſible ſins, and fear of inextricable wofull miſery, wherein he hath thrown himſelf, doth caſt away all hope of relief to be had, and ſo is tortured and vexed within himſelf without reſt. In this ſort of deſperation, the miſerable man having wreſtled a while, doth either turn himſelf to a carnal temporary conſolation in this world, and maketh choyce of a careleſſe and ſecure deſperation, that he may be rid of preſent anxiety, or elſe he reſolveth to diſpatch himſelf by ſome ſort of ſelf-murder, counting it more eaſie to die by his own hand, then to live and endure the tormenting vexation of his own mind.

2. As for that ſort of anxious deſperation, which after the ſore byteing of the conſcience once wakned, falleth back again in carnal ſecurity, it is moſt perilous, and giveth very ſmall hope to the Paſtor, or faithfull friends

friends who perceive the man after fearfull wakening of his conſcience, to have fallen back to his old wayes, and turned careleſſe of the means of ſalvation: for, ſuch a man, is of ſet purpoſe and reſolvedly wicked. Such was the deſperation of *Cain*, who, after a whiles lamentation and houling for the curſe pronounced upon him by God, plucked up his heart, departed from the ſociety of the Church, where God giveth his preſence, and goeth into the land of *Nod*, or voluntary baniſhment, and giveth himſelf over to building of Cities, *Gen.* 4. 13, 14. Such alſo was the deſperation of *Eſau*, who, when he ſaw he was excluded from the ſpiritual bleſſing of the birthright, laments a little, and then turned himſelf toward the earthly bleſſing, and ſought all his conſolation in it, *Gen.* 27. 34, 38. yet ſuch men muſt be dealt with, if God poſſibly may bleſs the means.

3. As for the other ſort of anxious deſperation, except it be cured by Gods bleſſing of the means uſed, it draweth on voluntary and deliberat ſelf-murther. We put a difference between *brute ſelf-murther*, and *voluntary* or *deliberat* ſelf-murther: for this beaſtly brute ſelf-murther, may befall mad perſons, furious, melancholious, diſtracted perſons, or ſuch as are beſet by ſome evil ſpirit, in whom the faculty of reaſoning is ſo impeded, that without the uſe of reaſon, or common ſenſe, they are carried to deſtroy themſelves ſome way. Such perſons can hardly be called *voluntary* and deliberat ſelf-murtherers, becauſe they are neither able to obſerve and diſcern their own condition, nor their danger, wherein they are, nor any circumſtances which might hinder them from the miſchief; and therefore it cannot properly in this caſe be called deſperation, becauſe the miſerable perſon is not ſo much capable of reaſon as to conſider the grounds and motives of hope or deſpair.

But voluntary ſelf-murther, proceedeth from properly called *deſperation*, becauſe the wretch, after deliberation

deliberation, how to escape from misery lying on and coming on, when all reason of hope seemeth to fail him, he casts away any further inquisition after the remedy; and out of apprehension, that he can be in no worse case after his death, then he presently feeleth, and that he can no other way be rid of his present torment then by death, wittingly and willingly putteth hand in himself. In this voluntary self-murther, sometime the sense of wrath for sin committed, doth predomine, as in *Judas* the traitour, his desperation and self-murther: sometime the apprehension of more worldly misery, more bitter then death, doth predomine, as in King *Saul*, who chooſed rather to fall on his own sword then fall alive into the hands of the Philistines, 1 *Sam.* 31. 4. and in *Achitophels* hanging himself, when he foresaw what misery should come upon himself, when his counsel was not imbraced by *Absalom*, 2 *Sam.* 17. 23.

4. To speak of self-murther in general, requireth a Treatise larger then our purpose doth permit; it sufficeth us to speak a little to it, as the temptation thereunto, and desperation of finding Gods mercy is a hindrance of regeneration. To this end, where any fear or suspicion of any intention toward this fearfull sin, doth appear, all meekneſſe should be used by all that have interest in the person suspected, that may serve to save the vexed party from such a mischief; God must be in-called and requested for relief unto the patient: Physicians should be called, and moe Pastors then one, if they can be had, the soul in danger must by friends be watched and waited on, in a prudent maner night and day, that he never be alone. If the person be capable of reason, he must be dealt with freely to confesse his temptation and purpose toward this sin, the causes moving him must be inquired after; and if they be other then sense of sin and fear, or feeling of Gods wrath, then course must be taken to make the party sensible of sin and to fear Gods wrath, and to consider, that if they give way to that sin they are tempted unto, they

do

do no leſſe, in effect, then caſt themſelves in hell, where the juſtice and wrath of God ſhall lye upon them without hope of eaſe or ending of their everlaſting torment, from which fearfull deſtruction, they may be preſerved both in ſoul and body, if they ſhall acknowledge their ſin, and flye to God in Chriſt offering grace and pardon of ſin and delivery from hell, and right unto heaven, promiſed to all and every one who ſhall imbrace Jeſus Chriſt for their redemption. And for theſe, whoſe vexation is mainly from the conſcience of heinous ſins, and felt wrath of God purſuing them, the grace offered in the Goſpel muſt be cleared unto them and inculcated; if they can be moved to give reaſons of their fear and to propone their doubts, who knoweth what bleſſing may follow on their free dealing, and from faithfull anſwers from Scripture returned unto them? Conferences of experimented Chriſtians may with profit be made uſe of in the patients audience, whereby the party may receive both increaſe of knowledge and ſome beginnings of comfort. Among other means, godly perſons, who have in their own exerciſe had experience of ſuch temptations, and have gotten victory by flying unto Chriſt, may ſerve much by their conference to encourage them. In ſome of thoſe tempted ſouls, tokens of good hope will ſhortly appear; in others, it may be, none can conjecture what ſhall be the event, till the time declare it, whether juſtice or mercy was intended of God; for, both in the elect, who are cured of this diſeaſe, and in the reprobat who periſh in their ſin, the ſame ſymptoms may appear; if the anxiety and expreſſions of the one and the other be compared. Therefore, care muſt be had of every one under ſuch temptations, whatſoever the event may be and the Lords bleſſing waited for in the uſe of the means. Scripture ſheweth us how hard exerciſes Gods dear children have been under. Beſide many other Saints, we ſhall only name two witneſſes, the one is *Heman* the Ezrait, that precious ſoul, not much inferiour to *Solomon* in wiſdom,

dom, 1 *King.* 4. 31. of whom no man could ſay he was a weak brain and hypochondriack or melancholious perſon, whoſe ſad exerciſe ſtands regiſtrated (*Pſ.* 88.) for many mans comfort. The other witneſſe ſhall be *Job*, whoſe perplexities we read in his diſpute with his friends, and how he taſted of this bitter temptation alſo, Job 7. 13, 14, 15. *When I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint, then thou ſkareſt me with dreams and terrifies me with viſions, ſo that my ſoul chooſeth ſtrangling.* Behold there is a very ſad exerciſe of the moſt holy and righteous man on earth; there is a ſore temptation even unto ſelf-murther, but how is this temptation over-come? firſt, he doth not hide his temptation, but openeth it up in the worſt ſhape: this giveth the temptation vent, he will not conceal it, nor be Sathans ſecretar in this; and this is one mean to weaken the temptation. Then he preſenteth it before God, and poureth out his complaint unto the Lord, and this giveth him the victory. So let all ſouls tempted unto deſperation do, and cleave to God in Chriſt, and they ſhall be victorious alſo.

CHAP. XI.

Concerning them that abſolve themſelves without warrand.

THe third rank of thoſe that impede their own regeneration, remaineth to be ſpoken of. Of this kind are all they, who, after they have ſlightly examined themſelves, and are convinced of ſin and of deſerved death, if they were dealt with in rigour of juſtice, do unwarrantably abſolve themſelves, deceiving their own conſcience by a fallacy, falſe ſylogiſme or captious reaſoning, and from the conſcience, as from a blinded or ſeduced Judge, do draw forth a ſentence of abſolution to themſelves which God doth not allow. All ſuch perſons do either lay down ſome falſe principle or ground for abſolution of ſinners; or, if they lay

lay down a true ground, they make wrong application of that ground to themſelves, and ſo beguile themſelves miſerably.

The firſt ſort.

SOme do grant themſelves to be ſinners, but do perſwade themſelves, that God is ſo mercifull as he will not deſtroy any man for ſin: which principle being once laid down, no wonder ſuch men go on in their own way and ſing a *requiem* to their own ſouls. Of this ſort of men the Lord doth ſpeak, *Deut.* 29. 18, 19. ſhewing, that he makes his covenant with his people, *leſt there ſhould be among you,* ſaith he, *a root that beareth gall and wormwood. And it come to paſs, when he heareth the words of this curſe, that he bleſs himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my own heart, to add drunkenneſs to thirſt.* It is poſſible, few ſhall be found ſo impudent, as that they dar, in expreſſe termes, profeſſe this their miſ-belief of Gods juſtice; yet, they are not a few who foſter this error in their heart, who having, as it were, made a Covenant with death and hell, are far from fearing to periſh in their ſins. In this ſort are all they to be ranked, who conceive, that all the threatnings in the Scripture are given forth, to the intent, that men, being bridled by terrors, might compoſe themſelves to a more humane and ſocial life among others; who, leſt they ſhould ſeem Atheiſts in word, do cry up Gods mercy, bounty and love to man, ſo as they make ſmall reckoning of the Lords truth and juſtice, even as if the juſtice of God in puniſhing rebels, could not conſiſt with his mercy to the penitent, or as if the end of creating man, could not be obtained, if obſtinat ſinners be deſtroyed.

2. The main cauſe of ſuch error, is an obſtinat purpoſe to walk after the counſel and imagination of their own heart; and becauſe they cannot quiet their conſcience in following their own wayes, except in promiſing to themſelves impunity in their ſinning, they preſume confidently to go on in their own wayes againſt all

all threatenings, and so do blow their consciences blind. Such profane presumption, although it deserveth to be beaten with a rod, rather then to be reasoned with, yet let the Pastor deal with the presumer, as he ought to do with other desperat like sinners; and in the first place, let him propose for remedy of this evil, what the Lord doth speak against such a person, *Deut.* 29. 20. *The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousie shall smoak against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lye upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven.* And as he findeth this work upon him, So let him deal with him.

2. Some are near of kindred to such persons, who do not reject all threatenings, yet do think in their heart that none are in danger except grosse flagitious and notorious sinners; but as to themselves, they conceive because they are not the worst of men, they are without the reach of divine justice, especially if their conversation be according to humane laws so regulated as they have the reputation of honest neighbours. With such men Christ dealeth (*Luk.* 13. 1, 2, 5.) when word came concerning the *Galileans* whose blood *Pilat* mixed with their sacrifices, Christ saith to them, *Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all Galileans, because they suffered these things? I tell you, nay, but except ye repent you shall all likewise perish.* This is the remedy prescribed by Christ to such men.

3. Some there are who hope to be absolved before God, and do absolve themselves in their own conscience, by their good works and obedience done to the law: Of this sort was *Paul* before his conversion, who, till the time that the spiritual light of the law brake in upon his mind and killed the conceit of his own inherent righteousnesse, was no mean man in his own eyes. *Rom.* 7. 9. Such was the rich young man in the Gospel, who said to Christ, that he had keeped all the commands from his youth up, till Christ did prove him

him a covetous Idolater, who put a higher price on his riches then upon Christ and the kingdom of heaven: Such were the Pharisees, who, by their obedience to the law (such as it was) doubted nothing to absolve themselves, and that God should absolve them also. But that the met-yaird should be no longer then their cloath, or the law of further extent then their imagined possible practice, they admitted no metonymie or figurative speech in the law, whereby under one branch of a duty commanded, all duties of that kind are comprehended, and all faults contrary to the duty are forbidden. As for example, they counted not the sixth command to be violat, except the man did take away his neighbours life, nor the seventh command broken, except by grosse adultery and violation of the marriage-bed; nor the eighth command transgressed, except another mans goods were openly or privately taken away, whose mistake Christ doth correct, *Matth. chap.* 5. and 6.

2. Such men as those are far from repentance, far from humbling themselves before God and seeking remission of sin through Christ; for, they are ignorant of the righteousnesse of the Gospel by faith in Jesus Christ, and of the way of coming to ability for doing any acceptable work by faith in Christ, and therefore they *go about to establish their own righteousnesse*, Rom. 10. 3. and 9. 31, 32. The false ground which they do lay for their own absolution, is this, they think to be justified by their works, against which ground, the Apostle hath pronounced condemnatory sentence. *Rom.* 3. 20. *By the deeds of the law, shall no flesh be justified in Gods sight; for, by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

3. With this sort we may joyn these, who not only come short of the obedience due to the law, but also are in conscience convicted of many transgressions of the Lords law; yet, they conceive that God will not exact of them, or of any man who is about to obey his law, more then the man can in the common infir-

mity of flesh overtake, and do perswade themselves that God will be satisfied with all them, in whom is a willingnesse to obey the law: their false ground which they lay, is this, that God will accept a mans will for the deed: And to this purpose they do abuse the Scriptures, *Isa.* 1. 19, *If you be willing and obedient, you shall eat the good things of the land*, And, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. *If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.*

4. But here is their error, whereupon they purchase from their conscience mis-informed an unwarrantable absolution; first, they lay down for a ground that they must be justified by works. 2. Because they know they do come, and shall come short in obedience, they turn the condition of the covenant of works, into other terms then God hath appointed, and make the will of a man to obey the law so far as he is able, to be the condition of the covenant, which God disclaimeth. 3. They deceive themselves in this, that what is spoken to converted believers in Jesus Christ, already justified by faith, aiming at new obedience, they do apply to themselves, lying under the curse and covenant of works: for, it is true indeed, when God is dealing with those that are already justified by faith in Jesus, and have renounced all confidence in their own works, and fled unto Christ, and have taken on his yoke, the Lord doth take in good part the first fruits of the new creature, and doth much esteem the tender fruits of the spirit, as the places cited (*Isa.* 1. and 2 *Cor.* 8.) do shew. But when the Lord hath to do with the proud natural man, the unrenewed man, the man that is not humbled for violation of the covenant of works, he dealeth with him according to the rigour of the law, according to the condition of the covenant of works, pronouncing his curse against that man, for every sin, till the sinner be humbled and flye to Christ.

5. With

5. With the former we may joyn all these, who believe they may wash away their sins, partly by bearing such afflictions as are laid on them by God in this life; partly, by their tears, prayers, fastings, pilgrimages penances and scourging of themselves; and partly, by their almes-deeds and other good works, do believe they shall make amends for all their misdeeds; and what they cannot perfect in this life for the mater of good works, they will take assignation to the supererogation and superfluity of the merits of Saints, made over unto them by the Pope; And what for the mater of suffering is not endured in this life, they will take upon them to endure in an imaginary purgatory and place of hell after this life, and so (poor souls) they think they may absolve themselves at least from the sentence of everlasting condemnation by such poor shifts as those. But the truth is, so long as they rely upon their own sufferings and satisfactions they deny both the necessity and the worth of Christs sufferings; and so long as they have confidence in their own works, or works of other men, they reject and disclaim the covenant of grace, and yet, behold how proud they prove themselves to be, *Isa.* 58. 3. when they plead with God, saying, *wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?*

6. Last of all, unto the former sort we joyn these who please themselves in the composition of righteousness by works and righteousnesse by faith, thinking to save themselves under the shelter of the one righteousnesse, or of the other, however God shall deal with them. Such were the Seducers and seduced amongst the *Galatians*: for refuting of whose errour, the Apostle (as it were) travelled in birth till he brought them to take up the right frame of Christs way of salvation,

7. The cause of all such mens deceiving of themselves in a false absolution of their conscience, is their igno-

rance both of the righteouſneſſe of the law and of the righteouſneſs by faith: for, ſuch as think their ſins are ſo few and light, or their lives ſo innocent, or their good works they have done ſo weighty, and their purpoſe to do yet moe good works, to be ſo holy, or their pains taken in religion ſo conſiderable, or their ſufferings reſolved upon, ſo great, and thereupon do abſolve themſelves, conſider not that the law, or covenant of works, doth require perfect, perſonal obedience to all Gods law, under the pain of Gods curſe, growing in *Items* as the law is oftener tranſgreſſed, till they flye in to the perfect ranſom of Chriſts obedience. And as for the righteouſneſſe of faith in Jeſus, they conſider not, that his righteouſneſſe will not be beſtowed upon any who do not renounce all confidence in their own or others works, and betake themſelves altogether to the only grace of Chriſt; they conſider not, that if the worth of any work be relyed upon, the bargain of free grace is ſpoiled, and clear marred; for, *if it be by works, it is no more of grace; and if it be of grace, it is no more of works*; for, theſe two are ſo oppoſit one to another in the mater of mans election and juſtification, that they can no more conſiſt together as cauſes procuring or moving God, then contradictory ſentences can be both true, as *Paul* teacheth, *Rom.* 11. 6.

3 A third ſort of ſelf-deceivers and unwarranted ſelf-abſolvers, we reckon all perſons poyſoned with deadly hereſies, who, being drawn away from the doctrine of Chriſt, ſet down in the holy Scriptures turn after ſome falſe chriſt and falſe religion of mens or their own deviſing, giving unto their Idol, what worſhip, what ſervice, what employment, what power they pleaſe, and making their own conditions of peace with God as they think good; ſome denying the eternity of the Godhead of the true Chriſt; ſome the reality of his aſſumed humane nature; ſome evacuating ſo far as they can his three offices, and the fruit of his execution thereof; all of them promiſing to themſelves

ſelves ſalvation in another, then in the true Chriſt deſcribed to us in Scripture, who is Creator, up-holder and Governour of all things, very coeternal God with the Father and holy Spirit, in the fulneſs of time made man, ever-living Prophet, Prieſt and King to his Church, both before his incarnation and conſtantly ſince, the way, the truth and the life, made of God unto true believers in him, wiſdom, righteouſneſſe, ſanctification and redemption, who walks among the golden candle-ſticks, and ſearches the wayes and hearts of every man, as he holdeth forth himſelf in theſe Epiſtles unto the ſevenChurches of *Aſia*, Revel. chap. 2. and 3. Of this danger of miſtaking the true Chriſt, and embracing a falſe in his room, he himſelf doth carefully fore-warn his Diſciples, *Math.* 24. 4, 5, 24, 25, 26, *Take heed that no man deceive you; for many ſhall come in my name, ſaying, I am Chriſt, and ſhall deceive many.*

The proper remedy of this evil, is this, *let every one that hath an ear, hear what the ſpirit ſpeaketh to the Churches*, not only in theſe ſeven Epiſtles, but alſo in all the reſt of the holy Scriptures, which are the expreſſions of the holy Spirit; but, *if any man receive not the truth in love*, ſet down by the Lords Spirit in the Scripture, his puniſhment is ſet down by the Apoſtle, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 11. and *for this cauſe*, to wit, *becauſe they received not the love of the truth that they might be ſaved, God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould believe a lye, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſſe.*

1. The fourth ſort of abſolvers of themſelves without Gods warrand, are theſe who pretend unto true religion, and deny the power of it; of whom ſome are convinced of their duty to repent their ſins and to forſake their luſts, and to endeavour a reformation of their life; and this they do promiſe to themſelves, and purpoſe ſeriouſly to do (as they think) only they cannot preſently, and at once break off the courſe they

are upon, but do hope by little and little to come forward, and at length that they shall wholly give themselves to religious exercises, and a holy life; mean time they conceive, they may come in among the true converts and young beginners, albeit they come not up the length which they intend, but are under the power of some beloved lusts, which they cannot rid themselves of, but do hope they shall betime overcome them. Such men do miserably mistake the mater, first, in that they think their purpose of repentance and a new life bred in them by conviction of their duty, to be the very grace of regeneration and begun sanctification. Secondly, they conceive that the lusts which do reign in themselves are common to them and all other regenerat persons, of whom few or none (think they) want their own grosse faults. Thirdly, they conceive they can repent more seriously when they please, and will repent after a whiles following of their beloved lusts, as if repentance were not a saving grace of the holy Spirit, whom they do daily provoke by their vilenesse, but a work in the power of every mans free-will, being once convinced of his sin. Fourthly, they do not consider, that by the delay of repenting and turning from all sin unto God, their heart is daily more and more in Gods Judgement, hardened, and God provoked to punish their voluntary impenitence with judicial hardnesse of heart, that they shall never repent. Such men our Lord compareth to the disobedient Son, who promised to his Father he would go work in his vineyard, and went not. *Math.* 21. 30. Such men are they, who know the will of the Lord, but do it not, and therefore worthy of double punishment, *Math* 12. 47. The remedy of this evil Christ giveth. *Luk.* 13. 24. 25. 26. *Strive to enter at the strait gate; for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able,* Men know not how soon God may shut the door, therefore men had need *while it is to day, not to harden their hearts.* Psal. 95. 8.

2. Other

2. Other some are, who being of a civil life, profeſſe and do perſwade themſelves, that they indeed do repent and believe in Chriſt, and by faith in him do certainly expect ſalvation freely of his grace. If you poſe any ſuch men, whether they do indeed believe in Chriſt, they ſhall preſently anſwer, that they firmly do believe in him, and that they never doubted but he is their ſweet Saviour who died for them. If you preſs them to ſpeak in earneſt from their heart, they ſhall preſently be ill pleaſed with the queſtion, and ask, what cauſe of ſuſpecting the ſincerity of their faith and repentance can be juſtly alledged? or, what cauſe hath any man to ſuſpect them, or doubt of Gods favour toward them in Chriſt? In whom ſhould we believe (ſay they) if not in Chriſt? Is there any other Saviour of ſinners beſide him? If a man pleaſe to try the truth of their faith by their repentance, they ſhall forthwith affirm, that they repent day and night, and have juſt cauſe ſo to do; for, in many things we ſin all, and why then ſhould we not alwayes repent? If they be asked of their love to God and their neighbour, they ſhall anſwer after the ſame maner. Such men are theſe, of whom Chriſt ſpeaketh, that they will confidently come to him and call him Lord, Lord, and yet be found no wayes carefull to do the Lords will, but ſervants to their own luſts.

3. Such men do deceive themſelves, firſt, by framing to themſelves ſuch carnal notions of faith and repentance, and of the love of God and of ſaving hope, and other ſpiritual graces, as in their phantaſie they conceive they do practiſe, which conceptions are not grounded upon the Word of God. Secondly, they eſteem the aſſent of their mind unto the truth, commending theſe duties unto men. as good as the performance of them: and they do take the ſentence of their conſcience concerning the equity of ſuch duties, for the ſentence of their conſcience bearing witneſſe of their practice and obedience of theſe duties; and while their conſcience ſaith *Why ſhould not I do ſo?* they take that for as good, as if

it had said *I do so*: but saving graces go deeper then civil carriage, and to commend the duties of repentance and faith in Christ is not enough, except they be put in practice also, in daily sorrow for sin and hatred of it, and flying to Christ daily to be washen and more and more sanctified.

4. Some there are, who, when they have heard that a man is justified by faith in Christ only, without the works of the law, do imagine a faith, which needeth not to bring forth any good works at all; and so they take off the justified man from all necessity of following good works, as far as they take off good works from being the cause of justification, and do open a door to themselves to live after their own will in the lusts of their flesh, conceiving, that they who believe in Christ are free, not only from the covenant of the law, but also from the command of the law, against whom our Lord doth speak, and doth cut off such libertines and turners of the grace of God into wantonnesse, from the kingdom of heaven, *Matth.* 5. 17, 18, 19. And the Apostle, to guard against this self-deceit, (*Heb.* 12. 14.) commandeth to *follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*

5. Some there are, who pretending to esteem well of the offer of the Gospel, and of the duty of following the means of making them partaker of the marriage-supper, do yet think themselves excusable, when they have much ado in their worldly callings, albeit they prefer the care of their family and provision for their things out-ward, unto the main work of their entertaining communion with God; yea, they conceive, that God will allow them in so doing, as Christ doth insinuat in the parable of the ghuests invited to the feast, answering the invitation with *I pray have me excused*, Luke 14. 18, 19. This is a rife evil in great personages, rich persons and such as are much imployed in earthly affairs; such men deceive themselves, first, in laying down this ground with themselves, that their earthly affairs,

affairs, the neceſſity whereof doth, firſt, and moſt ſenſibly appear, muſt in the firſt room be cared-for, and that the one thing neceſſar may be followed after, as their civil and earthly affairs may permit. Secondly, they reckon gain to be godlineſs, 1 *Tim.* 6. 5. for, they cannot be perſwaded when gain may be had, that God requireth of any man to ſlip the occaſion, or to put his worldly goods in hazard, by defending or following maters of religion. Thirdly, they think themſelves ſo wiſe, as they can well enough ſerve two Maſters, God and covetouſneſſe, albeit when it cometh to the proof, they will be found to ſerve, not God, but their own luſts. This error our Lord refuteth and giveth warning to beware of it, *Matth.* 6. 24. And, *Luke* 21. 34. *Take heed to your ſelves, leſt at any time your hearts be over-charged with ſurfeting and drunkenneſs and cares of this life.* No wonder then, that ſuch men profit not by the Word of God, but remain fruitleſſe, becauſe they are by our Lord compared to the ground that receiveth the ſeed among thorns, *Mat.* 13. 22. *He heareth the Word, but the cares of this World, and the deceitfulneſs of riches, choaks the Word, and he remaineth unfruitfull.*

6. Some there are, who, having received a ſufficient meaſure of gifts, whereby they may promove the kingdom of Chriſt, and be profitable to the ſociety they live in by making uſe of their gifts, do pack up all their duties in a ſequeſtration of themſelves from all buſineſſe, conceiving this way to be fitteſt both for God's ſervice and their own ſalvation. Whereupon, they betake themſelves to a private life in ſome obſcure corner, chooſing rather to live as Monks and Eremits, then to appear in publick and make uſe of their gifts, with the hazard of toyling themſelves and toſſing of their eſtimation among beholders of them. And this their reſolution is backed with a pretended purpoſe, to ſpend their time in reading and prayers, without provoking any man to hatred or emulation againſt them; thus they conceive they ſhall provide beſt for their own eaſe

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and safety: and if withall, they apprehend that they are not fitted with gifts, which may be profitable to others, and do think, what they have bestowed upon them by God, to be scarce sufficient for the carrying of themselves on in the course that tendeth to happinesse, then they conceive they are well excused, if they let all publick works alone, without putting forth their finger to help what they see amisse. We do not deny, but sundry godly persons, in the heat of persecution, have been forced to lurk in a wilderneſse among wild beasts during the time of the danger, of whose fellowship the world was not worthy; neither do we deny, that age and infirmity of body may make men unfit for all publick imployment; But, the fault we taxis of such men, as being able, in Church or State, to do service to God and the society they live in, do, for the love of their own ease, hide their talent, and not make use thereof for the benefit of others; for, If a narrow search be made of such mens resolution, the fear of outward trouble in the world, a declining to fight the fight of faith, impatience to be at any pains, and a desire to keep the estimation of their parts from the hazard of mens censure, and love of their own fleshly ease, will be found the fountain of their resolution. But, here we deal with none but such as the Apostle and Christ doth speak against, to wit, such as in some honest imployment, for the common utility, refuse to be at pains and work, and therefore are not worthy of their bread, 2 *Thess.* 3. 10. And let us hearken to Christs judgement of such men, whom the world admireth for most holy Moncks, in the parable of the talents, he taketh up the lazy lubbart, of whom we speak, under the reckoning of a knavish servant, who because he had but one talent (which amounteth to no small sum) went away and hid it in the earth, *Mat.* 25. 26. *Thou wicked and slothfull servant*, saith he *&c.* and, *ver.* 30. *cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

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The remedy is, that men of parts and abilities do not yield unto their lazy humor nor to their discouragements, which may foster their temptations to idleneſſe, but study rather to live in the ſenſe of their obligations to God, and to improve all that they have received from him, for his honour and the well-fare of his people: and to this end, it is fit they ſhould hearken to the counſel of judicious friends, rather then lean to their own judgment over-ſwayed with temptations, leſt the Lord decipher them, and lead them forth with the workers of iniquity, *Pſ.* 125. 5.

7. Some are very like, in all externals, to the true converts, ſo far as can be obſerved by beholders: for, they profeſſe the true religion with others, they ſeem to have conſecrat themſelves unto Chriſt, they aſſociat themſelves unto, and haunt the company of theſe who are in beſt eſteem, and joyn themſelves alwayes with the reputed godly, they ſeem ready prepared to bear Chriſts croſſe, and to go forth out of the city after him bearing his reproach, and to be waiters upon his ſecond coming, yet inwardly they were never renewed, they are not troubled with the ſenſe of ſin and ſinfullneſſe, they do not in earneſt, or ſeriouſly, ſeek after Chriſts righteouſneſſe and remiſſion of ſin through him, nor worſhip God in their ſpirit. Theſe are deſcribed to us in the parable of the fooliſh and wiſe Virgins. *Matth.* 25. the fooliſh were in company and outward fellowſhip of religion with the wiſe, their outward converſation was without ſcandal, as was the behaviour of the wiſe; they had lamps of profeſſion as the wiſe, and were not ſuſpected by themſelves or others to be unſound, they went forth in profeſſion waiting for the coming of the Lord, as the wiſe did; and laſt of all, no other infirmities were found in them, then ſuch as the wiſe Virgins were ſubject unto alſo, they all fell aſleep now and then, nothing could be outwardly found to difference them from the wiſe Virgins; which external likeneſſe, as it deceived the beholders of theſe fooliſh Virgins,

Virgins, So also it deceived themselves; neither shall this personal difference be openly manifested, till the Judge, the searcher of hearts, shall come and separat the goats from the sheep, and the hypocrits from the unfeigned believers. The remedy is, that every one who pretend unto holinesse externally, search their own hearts, and inward sinfulnesse, daily, and flye to Christ in earnest, that their nakednesse may be covered and their affections made spiritual, seeking after things above, and that by faith in Christ they may be filled with the unction of the holy spirit, for bringing forth true fruits of faith.

8. Unto the former, we may joyn such, as for their eminent gifts above the common sort of pious people, and their abilities to confer, discourse and dispute of maters of religion, seem to themselves and to beholders also, eminent Saints, especially if they appear sharp censurers of others, and zealous against every least degree of sin in others, but most of all, if they, for their endowements, be fitted, and called to pray in publick and preach the Gospel to others, and withall do live without scandal, they doubt nothing but they are high in Gods estimation, as they are set up in reputation among the godly in the visible Church. Now that such gifted men may deceive themselves, and passe sentence in their own favours for their own absolution from any challenge, which may condemn them, our Lord doth fore-warn us, *Matth.* 7. 21, 22. telling us, that not only many private professors of the christian Religion, and seeming zealous worshipers, crying *Lord, Lord*, may deceive themselves and misse heaven, but also Preachers of the Gospel, yea and Prophets, yea and men indued with the gift of doing miracles and casting out of devils in Christs name, not a few shall be disclaimed by Christ and condemned by him in the day of judgment. If it be asked, what can be their mistake, and the cause of Christs rejecting of them? we answer, Such men deceive themselves, 1. because both they and beholders also think them holier, then they who are inferiour in

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place and gifts unto them. 2. They compare themselves with those they live among, and not with the law of God. 3. They put not due difference between common gifts and saving graces. 4. They consider not, that to whom much is given, much will be required of them; and therefore, after tryal they will be found puft up with the estimation of gifts, inducments, imployment and successe which they have had, as if these were the undoubted evidences of their regeneration, and of Gods special love towards them; they will be found men void of repentance and far from humble walking in the sense of their natural, habitual and actual sins; they will be found void of all fear of wrath, which might drive them, in the acknowledgment of their blindnesse, poverty and misery, unto Christ the Redeemer and justifier of sinners; and they will be found void of all care of, and endeavour after, new obedience, conceiving, that the exercise of their gifts and successe in their imployments, are sufficient holinesse and evidence of the holy Ghosts dwelling in them and working by them; for, otherwayes, Christ will never disclaim them who have fled to him in the sense of their sin, and haunted him as their refuge, in the fear of deserved wrath, and studied by faith in him to be furnished to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, which he hath promised to them that abide in him.

It is one thing to be justified before God, another thing to be reputed righteous by men, and esteemed so by a mans own self; it is one thing to be indued with the knowledge of divine mysteries, another thing savingly to believe them and have them written in their heart; it is one thing to teach others the way of salvation, whereby the hearers may be saved, another thing to apply saving doctrine to themselves and make right use of it; it is one thing to cleanse the outer side of the plater, and reform the mans outward carriage, another thing to be inwardly renewed; it is one thing to teach repentance and mortification of lusts, another thing by the

he Spirit of Christ to mortifie in-bred pride, and the love of the world, vain glory and other carnal lusts. The course which *Paul* followed, is the only safe way, though he was a man most laborious in the work of the Lord, yet he lived most sensible of his natural corruption and the body of death; he did not trust in his holy life, but in Jesus Christ, *Rom.* 7. 24, 25. he so made use of faith in Christ, as he did not neglect the means of mortification of his sinfull nature. 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. *I keep under my body, and bring it under subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I my self should be a cast-away.*

The fifth and last sort of self-deceivers, by absolving of themselves without the Lords allowance or approbation, are temporizers, who, for their temporary believing, temporary repenting, temporary motions of their affections, and temporary amendment of their maners, do seem to themselves and others also, true believers. This sort, however it be in sundry cases coincident with one or moe of the former four self-absolvers, yet, because our Lord, in the parable of the sower of seed, (*Matth.* 13. 21. and, *Luke* 4. 17) doth put a difference between the stony ground and the other sorts of ground, we shall give it a room by it self, specially because it may have the own proper considerations.

Temporizers then, we call such, as upon temporary motives, from temporary principles for temporary ends, do imbrace the Word of the Lord readily, but slightly, and do as readily and lightly passe from it upon temporary motives, in special, when persecution ariseth for the Word, *Mark* 4. 16. when they have heard the Word *immediatly*, they receive it *with gladness*, and afterward, when affliction or persecution arises for the Words sake, immediatly they are offended. Lightly they take up truth delivered, and lightly do they passe from it again; they have no root in themselves or solid believing of the truth, for the truths cause; but what pleaseth others, pleaseth them, and what displeaseth others, doth displease

pleaſe them, in the maters of religion; the way of God ſet down in Scripture, when they hear it, they can ſay nothing againſt it, yea, they think it good to hear the Goſpel, and the largeneſſe of Gods grace, and becauſe it ſheweth unto them, a poſſibility of their ſalvation, they receive it with a ſort of natural gladneſſe, which ſort of believing doth endure for a time, to wit, ſo long as the way of others among whom they live, and the laws of the country, and proſperity and good eſtimation with others goeth along with the profeſſion of the truth received; but when the wind of another doctrine bloweth, and doth carry with it power to trouble and perſecute them who will not receive it, by and by they are offended, and renounce the truth controverted, becauſe it draweth trouble with the profeſſion of it: for, ſuch perſons ſuppoſe, that gain, eaſe and applauſe are very godlineſſe. It is true, ſometime the true believer may be ſurpriſed with a ſudain tentation to renounce the profeſſion of truth in ſome point, for fear of death, as *Peters* example doth ſhew us; but true faith recovereth ſtrength, and ariſeth after a fall, and endureth perſecution for that truth, as temporary belief doth not, but faileth altogether: And the temporizers repentance failleth alſo, becauſe it ariſeth from natural principles, and is for natural motives and ends. Such was the repentance of *Saul* in weeping and juſtifying *David* for ſparing his life, 1 *Sam.* 27. 21. Such was the repentance of the carnal Iſraelits *Pſal.* 78. 36. and the humiliation of *Ahab*; and ſuch is, their amendment of life, all nothing but temporary, and which doth not continue, as *Hoſea* (*chap.* 6. 4.) ſheweth, *O* Ephraim! *what ſhall I do unto thee? O* Judah! *what ſhall I do unto thee? for thy goodneſſe is like the morning cloud and like the early dew that paſſeth ſoon away.*

Neither is it any wonder, that unrenewed men may attain to ſomething like unto faith and repentance and outward amendment of maners, if we conſider that humane

humane writings find ſo much credit with men as not to be called in queſtion, but believed to be true; for experience teſtifieth, that their affections are moved ſometime with delight, and ſometime with indignation and pity, not only when they read Hiſtories, but alſo when they read very Fables and fained Romances which they know to be ſuch, and yet they cannot command their affections in reading of them: May not then an unrenewed man give as much credit to holy Scripture, and be affected with the holy hiſtory thereof, without any change made of his perverſe nature, the wiſdom whereof is enmity againſt God, and cannot ſubject it ſelf either to his law or Goſpel? Secondly, if we conſider what the power of a natural conſcience can work upon the affections, by juſt accuſations, or excuſations, for raiſing grief and joy therein, whereof not only Scripture, but alſo heathen writers do bear witneſſe, we need not doubt, but the natural conſcience may have the ſame power in a temporary believer. Thirdly, if we conſider what the precepts of morall Philoſophy hath wrought upon the Schollers of *Socrates* and *Ariſtotle* and other heathen Maſters, for the outward framing of them unto ſeeming vertues, we need not doubt what the precepts of the morall law may work upon a temporary believer, for putting a luſter on his life as was to be found in ſundry Phariſees without converſion and renovation of the inner man toward God. Fourthly, if we conſider what delight is found by Schollers in the contemplation of theſe things which Philoſophy doth treat of, we may eaſily perſwade our ſelves, that more delight may be had in contemplation of what holy Scripture doth hold forth, without making the man a new creature. But when unto the natural mans foreſaid ſeeming perfections, knowledge of the myſteries of religion and the gifts of preaching and prophecying are ſuperadded, which are but movable gifts, common to renewed and unrenewed men, and far from being ſaving graces, what wonder

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the natural man and temporary believer be puffed up with a high eſtimation of his own worth and hope of being received by Chriſt the Judge, and yet be found at laſt to have deceived himſelf, and unwarrantably abſolved himſelf by his own deluded conſcience, as Chriſt giveth warning, *Matth.* 7. 21.

Queſt. But, what? can a temporary believer want coming up all the length that is now ſpoken of and ſuppoſed to be indued with ſo many ſeeming good things, whereunto many ſaved Saints do not attain?

Anſ. Every ſaved Saint is beaten out of ſelf-eſtimation, for any thing in himſelf, beaten out of confidence in any thing he doth or can do, and is humbled in his heart by the law, the ſpiritual perfection whereof being underſtood, killeth his natural pride, *Rom.* 7. 9.

2. Every ſaved Saint is chaſed for refuge to flye to Chriſt, to his righteouſneſſe and the riches of grace holden forth in him, and every ſaved Saint is a new creature aiming more and more to follow the courſe of new obedience and drawing vertue from Chriſt by faith to pleaſe God and worſhip him in ſpirit, *Phil.* 3. 3. So that his purpoſe and endeavour in ſome meaſure, is like unto that of *David*, *Pſal.* 71. 10, 15, 16. ſaying, *I will hope continually, and I will praiſe thee more and more, my mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy righteouſneſſe and thy ſalvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof, I will walk in the ſtrength of the Lord God, I will make mention of thy righteouſneſſe, even of thine only.* But the temporary believer, reckoneth not for his debt and deſervings with the law, he is not humbled in the ſenſe of his ſins and ſinfulneſſe, and inability to ſatisfie the law by himſelf, he hath not the root of repentance in him; for immediatly upon the hearing of the Goſpel, he receiveth the Word with joy, without godly ſorrow for his ſins, *Luk.* 8. 13. The temporary believer, is ignorant of the righteouſneſſe of God by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, and goeth about to eſtabliſh his own righteouſneſſe, upon the bottom of his own blameleſſe

converſation, priviledges of the viſible Church, common gifts of the Spirit, and ſucceſſe with proſperity: all which, becauſe he is not juſtified by faith in Chriſt, do not advance him above the ſtate of the workers of iniquity, *Matth.* 7. 21, 22, 23.

The ſymptoms and ordinary ſigns of this malady of unwarrantable ſelf-abſolution, are theſe, 1. all of this ſort, are well pleaſed with their own wayes, they are not daily humbled in the ſenſe of ſhort-coming in duties, and chaſed to Chriſts righteouſneſſe, which may hide their nakedneſſe. 2. They are all ſecure and fear no wrath, but put the evil day far from them. 3. They cannot be induced to any accurat examination of their own life, wayes, condition or eſtate. If any man inſinuate any ſuſpicion of hypocriſie in them, or if their own conſcience begin to queſtion their ſincerity, they cannot endure it. 4. Albeit they ſay unto Chriſt *Lord, Lord*, yet they make little uſe of his office of mediation, of his power and vertue for illumination, humiliation, healing and helping on to ſalvation. 5. They look more to the ſeeming good things in themſelves for ſtrengthening their carnal confidence, then they take notice of the evil of a body of death in themſelves to drive them to Chriſt, the only deliverer from it. 6. Yea, they all ſerve ſome Idol, lurking in their heart, they yield obedience to ſome reigning luſt which they will not forſake, for which cauſe Chriſt foretells, that he will declare them to be but workers of iniquity, *Matth.* 7. 23.

The cauſes of this evil, are, 1. the ignorance of the law and the utter inability, yea, averſeneſſe of nature to be ſubject to it; the knowledge whereof might make men live all their dayes in a loathing of themſelves and cut off all hope of obtaining righteouſneſſe by the law. 2. The ignorance of that dear-bought righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, and of the riches of his grace, offering to impute his ſatisfaction to every ſelf-condemned ſinner who ſhall flye to him and accept his offer. 3. The ignorance

norance of the neceſſity of the bringing forth the fruits of faith, in love, and ſtudy of new obedience and ſanctification, by the furniture of Chriſt, without which no man ſhall ſee God. 4. The taking of a preſumptuous dead faith, in ſtead of that true juſtifying faith which layeth hold on Chriſt and worketh by love. The taking of a vain groundleſſe hope for that lively hope, which purifieth both the heart and external converſation alſo. 5. The comparing of themſelves either with the worſt ſort of vile ſinners, or with ſuch as are like to themſelves, or with the Saints in their groſſe failings not judging themſelves according to the law.

The uſe to be made of this doctrine is, firſt, to ſtir us up to take notice of that power of the ſoul called *conſcience*, which God hath put in every man to obſerve all the mans words, deeds and intentions, and to compare them with the law and will of God, ſo far as it is informed and to accuſe or excuſe, condemn or abſolve, ſmite or comfort the man as it findeth cauſe, that we ſuffer not our own conſcience to ſleep, but ſet it on work whilſt it is time, that we may know how all maters do ſtand between God and us.

Secondly, that we inform the conſcience well from the Scripture, not only concerning the law and covenant of works, whereby we may know how guilty we are of manifold ſins, and how impoſſible it is for us to be juſtified by our works, or to eſcape condemnation, but alſo concerning the Goſpel and covenant of gracious reconciliation by faith in Jeſus Chriſt and concerning the covenant of redemption, whereupon the covenant of grace offered in Chriſt is grounded

Thirdly, that we make due and orderly application of theſe covenants, that the conſcience may alwayes be furniſhed with mater of humiliation, and held on in the exerciſe of repentance, and not only keeped from deſperation, but alſo may be furniſhed with grounds of good hope to be ſaved, through the grace of our Lord Jeſus who hath purchaſed remiſſion

of ſins and imputation of his righteouſneſſe to every humbled ſinner flying to him for grace.

Fourthly, that being ingrafted in Chriſt by faith, we, by way of thankfulneſſe, ſtudy in the furniture of his Spirit, to live holily, juſtly and ſoberly; and that whatſoever meaſure of ſanctification we attain unto, we beware to fall back to that deadly error of ſeeking juſtification before God by our works, whereunto we are naturally inclined: for, upon this rock the flour and moſt ſhining profeſſors in *Iſrael* after the fleſh, made ſhipwrack of their ſalvation, *Rom.* 9. 32. Iſrael *which followed after the law of righteouſneſſe, hath not attained unto the law of righteouſneſſe, wherefore becauſe they ſought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.* And, *Rom.* 10. 3. *for they being ignorant of Gods righteouſneſſe, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſſe, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſſe of God.* Unto this error of ſeeking righteouſneſſe by our works, after entering in the way of juſtification by grace, we are all naturally inclined; for, the covenant of works is ſo ingraven in all *Adams* children, *do this and live*, that hardly can we renounce this way of juſtification, and howſoever it be impoſſible to attain righteouſneſſe this way, yet hardly can we ſubmit our ſelves to the righteouſneſſe by faith in Chriſt, which not only the experience of *Iſrael* after the fleſh maketh manifeſt, but alſo the experience of the *Galatians* lets us ſee; for, they having once outwardly renounced juſtification by works, and embraced the covenant of gracious reconciliation by faith in Jeſus, did turn about for a time, to ſeek juſtification by the works of the law, and were on the way of falling from grace and communion with Chriſt. And the experience of Papiſts doth ſhew the ſame; for, whatſoever they profeſſe concerning faith in Chriſt, yet they abhor juſtification by Chriſts imputed righteouſneſſe and do blaſpheme that way as a meer conceit of men and a putatitious or only imaginary righteouſneſſe,

neſſe, and do ſeek to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſſe, and to be juſtified, not only before men, but alſo before God, by the merits of their own and other mens works and ſufferings; the imputation whereof they can ſell for money, in the midſt of their blaſpheming the imputation of Chriſts righteouſneſſe. What can be ſaid for a thief, condemned to die for his faults, and redeemed by a potent man, upon condition that he ſhould be the domeſtick ſervant of the redeemer, to work his work all his life-time, and live upon his allowance, and ſo never be neceſſitated to ſteal any more? if the ranſomed thief ſhould after ſteal his Maſters goods, and make himſelf a ſtock-purſe whereupon he thought he might live, and looſe himſelf from his redeemers grace and live upon his own finding, were he not worthy, upon the finding out of his thifts and other faults, to be left in the hands of juſtice, to die according to his deſervings? And what could be ſaid for a tennent, labouring a parcel of ground of his Landſ-lord, for a yearly farm-duty, by his own miſcarriage falling to beggary, if he ſhould be taken in to the free table of his Landſ-lord, and truſted with the ſame parcel of ground to be laboured for his Maſters uſe, if he ſhould intervert the fruits of that ground, and being weary of his Maſters bounty and grace, ſhould ſeek to be freed of his Maſters ſervice, and to labour the ground for himſelf, for payment of rent? if upon the finding out of his thift, and not paiment of his rent, he ſhould be caſt in priſon, did he not deſerve to be dealt with according to *juſtice*, who would not live by *grace*? So may be ſaid of the man, who ſhall turn from juſtification by free grace, to ſeek juſtification by his works.

The fifth and laſt uſe of this doctrine is, that to the intent we may not abſolve our ſelves without Gods allowance, we ſtudy to make our calling and election ſure, by endeavouring to walk in the ſenſe of our unworthineſſe and ill-deſerving, and renouncing all confidence in any thing without Chriſt, to rely on him for

righteouſneſſe and life-eternal, and by faith in him draw ſpirit and life from him, for furniſhing us unto new obedience: for, he is the juſtified man, approven of God, *who hath no confidence in the fleſh, and rejoiceth in Jeſus Chriſt, and worſhipeth God in the ſpirit*, Philip. 3. 3.

THE

THE SECOND BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of conſiderations to be preſſed.

HItherto the ſickneſſes of the Conſcience of the un-regenerat man are ſpoken to, and this was needfull, to the end, that we might ſhew how Regeneration is either altogether kept off, or hindred from growing where it is begun. And becauſe many of theſe ſickneſſes, which deſtroy many of the ſons of *Adam*, cleave to the regenerat man, and though they do not reign, nor altogether prevail over him, yet do moleſt and vex him, and hinder his comfortable walking toward his everlaſting bleſſedneſſe: Now we come to ſpeak, firſt, in this Book, of theſe caſes of the conſcience of the man regenerat, which do brangle, and bring in queſtion his ſtate in grace, and make him doubt whether he be a man tranſlated out of the ſtate of nature, out of the kingdom of Sathan, or not. And next, of theſe caſes that concern his condition in the ſtate of grace in the following Book.

As to the firſt ſort of caſes, which concern the regenerat mans ſtate, ſome conſiderations muſt be premiſed, for making particulars afterwards more clear.

1. In the question of this, or that mans regeneration or his being in the state of grace, it is all one to question whether he be born again, or be effectually called, or indued with saving faith, or be a justified man, or be reconciled to God, or be an adopted child? And in the answer of this question, let it be proven, that he is any of these, and it is proven also, that he is all these: for, albeit these denominations, in their formal conceptions in the abstract, may be distinguished, yet upon the mater in the conceit they fall upon the same individual person altogether, because it is impossible to prove a man to be regenerat, but he must be proven also a true believer in Christ, a man reconciled to God, a man justified and an adopted child.

2. It is necessary therefore, for proving a man to be regenerat, to know the right description of the regenerat man which is given by the Apostle, *Phil.* 3. 3. *We are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh.* Wherein the Apostle holdeth forth the truly regenerat circumcised in heart. 1. He is not sinlesse, but so sensible of his sinfulnesse, as he hath no confidence in himself, nor any thing else in himself. 2. He is not free of accusations or tentations and doubts, but he flyeth to Christ for righteousnesse. 3. He is not an idle and unfruitfull branch, but a worshiper of God in spirit and truth. 1. He is burdened with sin. 2. He cometh to Christ for relief. 3. He puts on Christs yoke, *Matth.* 11. 28, 29. If a man have these three properties joyntly in him, he is a regenerae man, and may defend his interest (in the state of grace) and right to righteousnesse and eternall life through Jesus Christ.

3. Divine operations and saving graces which accompany salvation, such as are faith, repentance unto life, hope, Christian love to God and men for Gods cause, effectual vocation, justification, reconciliation, adoption, go together in time by Gods gift, but one of them goeth before another in order of nature;

ture; for, effectual calling goeth before faith, and faith goeth before hope, and before charity or love. Again, these graces which are given to the redeemed child of God joyntly, in respect of time, do not shew themselves in their evidence alike soon in time, nor do they equally manifest themselves when they do appear in time. And so the evidences of repentance may be discerned in not a few converts, before faith in Christ do shew it self in them clearly. So also love to God and his Saints oft-times may be discerned in a regenerat man, before he himself dare affirm any thing of his faith in Christ.

4. Albeit there be many regenerat persons, who for the present time cannot perceive in themselves any undoubted signs of their conversion; yet it is certain also, that there be many, who, to their own unspeakable comfort, are assured of their regeneration, and that they are translated from death to life, and that they have received the spirit of adoption and earnest of eternal life, as is pointed out in the experience of the Ephesians, *chap.* 1. 14. And this is certain also, that all who are fled to Christ for refuge, should by all means labour to make their calling and election clear and certain to themselves, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. And to this purpose we are commanded to examine our selves, and try whether we be in the faith or not, whether Christ by his Spirit be in us or not, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. for otherwise, except a convert know certainly the blessedness of his own state, and that he standeth in grace and favour with God, it is not possible for him to give hearty thanks to God for the change of his state, from being an enemy, to be made a reconciled subject and child of God. It is not possible for him to rejoyce in the Lord, or set chearfully himself to serve God, or comfortably call on God, as a father to him in Christ: Wherefore, all who in the sense of their sins and fear of deserved wrath are fled for refuge unto Christ, should deal by prayer earnestly with God, that he would graciously grant

unto

unto them his Spirit, by whose operation in them, they may know the saving graces which he hath freely bestowed upon them, of which gift of the holy Spirit the Apostle doth speak, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12.

5. The knowledge of a mans own regeneration, hath many degrees of clearnesse and assurance, by reason of the variety of conditions wherein a man truly converted may be: For, many doubts may arise in the man regenerat, which may darken his sight, and hinder the assurance of saving grace granted unto him, whereof sundry causes may be found, and in special these four among others. 1. In a man illuminat and renewed by the holy Spirit, there remains a great deal of ignorance, much doubting mixed with faith, by reason of unskilfulnesse of the convert to examine and discern this blessed change made in him, where through that cometh to passe in many young converts, which will be seen in infants, who have a soul indeed, but do not know or perceive that they have a soul till they come to some years of discretion; yea, many sound Christians, are oft-times at a stand about their regeneration, and know not what to make of their faith or repentance, especially when they feel the power of the body of death, the strength of natural corruption in themselves, and great indisposition for any spiritual exercise; they are forced with the Apostle to cry, *miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me?* Rom. 7. 24. mean time for weaknesse of their faith, they are not able at the first to wrestle against discouragment, and to come up unto the Apostles thanking God through Christ. 2. By the tentation of Sathan oft-times the perswasion of holy men is darkened, so as they cannot see the evidences of their own regeneration clearly: for, Sathan sets himself to vex the Saints who are delivered from his kingdom and bonds, whom albeit he know that he cannot destroy them, yet he will not cease to trouble them, that at least he may make them some way unfit for Gods service and marr their cheerfulnes in his service;

ſervice; and becauſe he feareth harm from them unto his kingdom, by their dealing with the unconverted to repent their ſins, and to turn unto God, therefore he finds them work at home in their own boſome, and puts them to defend themſelves and to forbear to invade his ſubjects, till they be ſetled themſelves. 3. Oft-times the Lord is offended by the ſins of the regenerat, and ſpecially by their groſſe tranſgreſſions, for which his Spirit being grieved, doth for a time ceaſe from comforting them, and doth not bear witneſſe with their ſpirits, that they are the children of God, as he hath formerly uſed to do. 4. Oft-times the Lord by ſuffering doubts to ariſe in their hearts, uſeth to try and exerciſe the faith of his children, and thereby to ſtir them up to the purſuing of the duties of piety and righteouſneſſe more vigorouſly and ſincerely, that after victory obtained over theſe tentations, they may be more confirmed in their faith, and more diligent in his obedience.

6. It may come to paſſe, that while the true convert doth moſt doubt of his own regeneration, that the work of Gods ſpecial grace may be obſerved in him and clearly ſeen by others more experienced in the wayes of God, and indued with the ſpirit of diſcretion. The reaſon whereof is, becauſe howſoever the weak convert, and child of light, walking in darkneſſe of tentation and deſertion, cannot diſcern his own bleſſed ſtate, yet there may appear, and be perceived in him, ſuch ſignes and undoubted evidences of ſaving grace, that the prudent beholder of him under his ſad exerciſe, may in the judgment of diſcretion and charity, declare his righteouſnes, and him for his ſtate to be in grace and favour with God. In theſe two diſciples going to *Emaus*, Luk. 24. ſaving faith was not extinguiſhed, albeit they were driven to ſuſpect themſelves to have been miſtaken, when they onee believed that Chriſt was the promiſed Saviour; for, in that ſame time, there appeared in them evident tokens of their unfained love to Chriſt:

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for, while they are troubled with suspition of their being mistaken about Christ, they are very sad and sorrowfull, and were regrating the sufferings of Christ, and were gathering what arguments they could for supporting their faith, whereby their dying faith might be supported by conference about this mater, laying forth their doubts and tentations one to another.

7. The precise time of begun regeneration, is not alwaies observed nor known, either by the regenerat man himself, or by beholders of his way, as experience makteh evident in many, who from their infancy are brought up in the exercises of true religion, in whose conversion no notable changecan be observed. In those the words of Christ in part are verified, *the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation.* Such persons when they begin to examine themselves, whether they be regenerat, whether they be in Christ, and at what time they were converted, they can neither determinatly condescend upon the time of their conversion, nor can they confidently speak of their conversion, till after sundry tryalls and experiences they can gather proofs of their sincerity from such signs, effects and marks of the work of saving grace in them, as may prove that Christ hath dwelt in them of before.

8. Albeit regeneration be of the same kind, speee and definition, in all the regenerat, yet it doth admit sundry accidental differences, when the conversion of such and such persons is compared: for, some do not stay long in the straits of regeneration, or new birth, but within a short space of time they are both wounded and healed, are both casten down and raised up again, are both slain by the Law and quickened by the Gospel: Of this sort we have a past proof in some thousand converts, *Act.* 2. who by one sermon or two were converted to the faith of Christ and fellowship with the Church. On the other hand, experience of many doth shew, they have been under the spirit of bondage a long time, before they could receive the consolations of

of the Gospel, *Heb.* 2. 15. Some in the beginning of their conversion are handled very tenderly, and afterward fall in hard exercises of mind, as we may see in *David*, who in his youth, while he was keeping his fathers sheep, did passe the time in holy songs, and playing on his harp, but afterward he was more sharply exercised, and much afflicted from time to time with the sense of divine wrath. Some in sorrow and much weeping do follow Christ, and study to promove his kingdom: such a one was *Timothy*, whom the Apostle exhorteth to admit a larger measure of consolation allowed unto him by the Lord, that he might be the more cheerfull and couragious in the warfare whereunto he was called, 2 *Tim.* 1. 4. Another of this sort was *Heman* the Ezrahit, who (*Psal.* 88.) declareth, that from his youth up he was so keeped under terror, as he was ready to die under discouragment: And in the experience of this holy man, we have a proof of what was holden forth in the preceeding consideration, to wit, that regeneration may be begun in a man, and well promoved before either himself or others can well discern it: for, of them who are keeped under the law and spirit of bondage, it is hard determinatly to judge, before faith in Christ begin to appear in them, whether their exercise be the special work of the holy spirit of regeneration, or not: for as it may come to passe, that the spirit of fear and bondage may for a time work, and go no further then to convict a man, and not go on to convert him, So also it may come to passe, that there be some wrestling of faith lying under-foot in the midst of terrors, not perceived for a while; of which wrestling none can well give out sentence, that it is a wrestling of saving faith, before faith get some victory over tentations, and break forth in some evident effects. In which case it is very needfull warily and circumspectly to apply the doctrine of the Gospel, so as the afflicted soul may be supported with hopes of a gracious out-gate; for, the work of the

law

law, humbling the sinner, is a fair call to come to Christ, and a messenger sent by Christ to bring him up, *Gal.* 3. 24.

9. Albeit the regenerat man, in respect of the state of his person, by standing in grace and favour with God, fixed and unmovable as the Apostle doth shew us, *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3. partly, because the love of God manifested to the believer in Christ is unchangeable; and partly, because the covenant of grace through Christ is an everlasting covenant, *Isa.* 55. 3. and partly, because the saving gifts and calling of God are such, as God will never repent him to have bestowed them, *Rom.* 11. 29. yet in respect of his condition the regenerat man, is subject to many changes in his life and conversation, in the disposition of his mind and affections, and in the exercise of his gracious habits, and in the sense and observation of the grace of God in him and favour of God toward him: for, it may come to passe, yea, and oft-times doth come to passe, that men who are regenerat, and in the state of grace, which is a notable good state, may be in a very evil condition, in a miserable and deplorable disposition of heart, as befell the Church of *Ephesus*, *Sardis* and *Laodicea*. And it may be also, that regenerat persons, after their consciences are wakened, and they do perceive the miserable and sinfull condition of their affections and conversation, that no small doubts arise in their hearts whether their state in grace be reall or not, which doubts will evanish, when after the renewing of their repentance, their condition is changed to the better: for, Christ pre-occupieth this tentation, speaking to the Church of *Sardis* and *Laodicea*, counselling them to strengthen the thing that remaineth, which was ready to dye, and not to doubt of his love toward them, *Revel.* 2. and 3.

10. These tentations whereby the regenerat man is troubled, and tempted to doubt whether he be in the state of grace, should be distinguished and discerned from

from actual doubting; for, there may be a temptation unto doubting, without a yielding unto the temptation, as we see in Christ our Lord, whom the devil durst tempt to doubt, whether he was the Son of God, but his holy heart could not admit such a temptation. And the Apostle (*Eph.* 6. 11, 12. *&c.*) doth warn the Saints, that our adversary Sathan useth to throw firy darts at all the children of God; which firy and poysonable darts, the regenerat man should not meddle with nor finger them, but by the shield of faith, with all speed, quench and extinguish them. But when a probable reason is joyned with the temptation, and the temptation doth appear to be very reasonable, and when there is a fear, that the tentation shall be yielded unto, except the scruple be removed, then let the temptation be examined and brought to the form of a reason or sylogism, that the strength of it being tryed to be null, it may be rejected; or let the temptation be communicated to a prudent friend or Pastor, who may discover the sophistry of the temptation; for, if the temptation shall be slighted and not discussed, albeit it lye quiet for a time, yet it will return again and raise more trouble and vexation to the conscience, then it did before.

11. In answering of doubts and temptations tending to weaken faith, it is needfull to observe and eshew an usual stratagem of Sathan, whereby he doth multiply and heap together a number of doubts; and after he hath suggested one doubt, presently doth suggest on the back of that another, and after that another, whereby he marreth the answering of the first doubt, which from the Word of God, either immediatly, or by some faithfull Friend or Minister, is offered for solution thereof: by this mean, Sathan endeavours that the mind of the afflicted person may, at one time, both be turned off from taking notice of the answer offered, and be taken up wholly with the consideration of the new suggested doubt, So that the answer to the new doubt hath no place, because the afflicted party doth not take heed thereto.

thereto. In this case, both the party afflicted, and the party offering consolation, must hold to the first doubt, and not suffer any other new doubt to have place, till a satisfactory answer be given to the first doubt, and after that, let every objection, moved by the party afflicted, be answered one after another in order.

12. Seing every doubt, whereby the regenerat person is troubled, doth tend either to weaken faith in Christ, or to hinder the bringing forth of the fruits of faith, let no answer to any doubt of this kind be esteemed sufficient, except it lead the afflicted person unto *Christ*, teaching him to humble himself before God; and being brought low in his own eyes, to lay hold by faith on Jesus Christ, the only Redeemer, and relief from sin and misery; and after laying hold on the Physician, to requeſt for the remedy of that evil which hath moved and given strength to the doubt: for, Christ is the end, both of the Law and of every spiritual exercise: for, the enjoining of such and such moral duties, whereby un-skillfull Physicians use to over-charge diseased consciences, commanding the afflicted party in the first place, to go about such and such duties, and the exercise of such and such vertues, as may remove the evil which gave ground to the doubt, can never avail the diseased person, except he be led first unto Christ for remission of sin and acceptation of his person, that in him, power to do these duties may be obtained, and by his Spirit, moral precepts may be quickened; for, if these precepts be pressed upon the diseased without Christ, they can do no more but detain the afflicted in self confidence, and make him hope in vain, that he may or can by his own work over-come the evil felt in him, or that he can by himself, attain to that good which he conceiveth necessar for loosing of his doubt; but let him go to Christ for remission of sin, and then for strength to go about the duty.

13. Because almost in all cases of conscience which pertain to the state of the regenerat man, some grace or

Christian

Christian vertue is pitched upon and called in question, whether it be in him or not, heed must be taken that evangelick graces, vertues or actions, be not weighed in the ballance of the moral Law and covenant of Works, wherein nothing hath weight which cometh short of absolute perfection of personal obedience; for, in the strict judgment of God and the conscience, according to the law of Works, no meer man, nor any action of man, can stand, *Ps.* 130. 3. for, there are so many imperfections and blemishes in the Saints and their best works, being compared with the perfect rule of righteousnesse by the Law, that whatsoever lustre or appearance of good may be in a work, it is blecked and made to hide it's face before the Law: but, let the tender buds of new obedience and fruits of faith, be examined by the grace of the Gospel, which judgeth of the begun obedience of the believer in Christ, according to the sincerity and uprightnesse of the man aiming at conformity to the Law, how short soever he come of his aim, and of the spiritual perfection of the Law, and it will be taken for new obedience. It is true, the Evangel requireth, that a man fled to Christ for justification, and reconciled to God by faith in Christ, should set himself to work the works prescribed in the moral Law, for the glory of God, and should aim at the exact obedience of all the Commands; yet, the Gospel doth not reject a good work for the defects, imperfections and blemishes thereof, but accepteth and taketh in good part the first fruits and buds of new obedience, and doth foster the tender and small beginnings, that they may grow and encrease. And the reason is, because the Gospel doth not teach us to seek the justification of our persons before God by works, but by faith in Christ, and then teacheth us to seek the justification of our faith before men in our own and others conscience, by the sincere endeavour of new obedience. And therefore,

14. While we are about the cure of the wounds of the conſcience and ſtrengthening of faith, we muſt on the one hand take heed, leſt we foſter preſumption, and hinder either the exerciſe of repentance, or doing diligence in following duties: for, Chriſtian graces do not impede, but help and ſtrengthen one another, if they be real and kindly, becauſe they muſt flow from the ſame fountain of the ſpirit of ſanctification, and do run toward the ſame end, which is the glory of God: and on the other hand, we muſt take heed leſt we preſſe the exerciſe of repentance, as it were out of our own ſtrength, or the practice of duties, ſo as we hinder the exerciſe of faith in Chriſt, who is that exalted Prince to give repentance, and is the author and finiſher of faith. Let us ſo cry up the imputed righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, that we neglect not to preſſe the regenerat man (freely juſtified by grace) to bring forth the fruits of faith, and to follow hard after the growth of ſanctification, without which, no man ſhall ſee the face of God; and let us ſo extoll the covenant of Grace, and freedom of the believer from the covenant of Works, that we neglect not to keep up the authority of the moral Law and the commands thereof, as the perpetual rule of new obedience, the uſe whereof is very profitable, in the whole courſe of a Chriſtian life, to hold forth the duty of believers in Chriſt, and to ſhew unto them, by their ſhort-coming in duties, the poyſon and power of corruption remaining in the Saints, and to make them ſenſible of the neceſſity of flying daily to that imputed righteouſneſſe by faith in Chriſt, and of drawing ſtrength from Chriſt to bring forth more aboundant fruits, whereby Chriſt ſhall be more and more precious in our eyes, and be acknowledged abſolutely neceſſar for our juſtification, ſanctification and ſalvation.

15. When queſtion is made concerning Chriſtian vertues and operations of the holy Spirit in us, the order of Gods working held forth to us in Scripture, is carefully to be marked by us: which is, that ſenſe of

ſin ſhould go before faith in Chriſt; for, the Law is a pedagogue to Chriſt, *for, he came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*, Matth. 9. 13. And faith in Chriſt goeth before the fruits of faith, and the fruits of faith before the ſenſible approbation of them, and approbation of the fruits by Scripture goeth before the ſenſible ſealing of the believer, and the quieting of the conſcience in its approbation of what the Scripture approveth; for, after we have believed, we come to be ſealed, *Epheſ.* 1. 13. Now, for the not obſerving this order, many real Chriſtians do make unto themſelves a very un-comfortable life; for, albeit they be convinced of ſin, and humbled in the ſenſe of their own inability to help themſelves, and are fled to Chriſt for pardon and help, and do lead a life blameleſſe, yet do they unhappily ſuſpend the acknowledging of the work of faith beſtowed upon them, and do diſquiet themſelves, ſo as they cannot reſt on Chriſt, but do quarrel the reality of their faith, till they ſhall feel and perceive, with approbation of their conſcience, ſuch and ſuch fruits of faith in themſelves, and that in ſuch a meaſure as they have fore-imagined to be the neceſſar evidences of faith; yea, and they refuſe to account themſelves perſons juſtified, becauſe they cannot perceive ſuch mature fruits in themſelves, as they conceive muſt not only be, but be acknowledged alſo to be, in the juſtified perſon, before he can lay hold on juſtification. Such perſons do, in effect, invert the order which they ſhould obſerve; for, when it were their part to flye unto Chriſt the only Mediator, becauſe they come ſhort of new obedience, and becauſe they are loaden with ſin, that in him they might have God reconciled to them, and by his Spirit, pouring in of his grace in their ſouls, to make them more holy, they take another and contrary courſe, by ſuſpending their faith upon their works, and do exact of themſelves works before faith, and ſo do weaken their own faith, and hinder it to bring forth ſuch fruits as they do require. It is reaſon indeed, to prove our faith by our works, and it is

juſt, that ſuch a faith be accounted dead, which is not accompanied with the purpoſe and endeavour to live holily, juſtly and ſoberly. But it is againſt all reaſon and equity to condemn weak faith, accompanied with the purpoſe of a new life, as if it were no faith, becauſe it hath not as yet brought forth ſo fair and fully ripe fruits as the weak believer would. It were their wiſdom, when they perceive ſuch impotency to do what is good, and ſuch ſtrength of the body of death in them, to flye unto the Redeemer ſo much the more, and in him to ſeek remiſſion of ſin, and ſtrength to bring forth good fruits, and to be ſucking juice and ſap out of him, as the true Vine: for, if we come to him and abide in him, we ſhall bring forth much fruit, *Joh.* 15. 4, 5. For, faith in Chriſt, in order of nature, goeth before good works; for only they who come to Chriſt and abide in him, do bring forth abundant fruit; and not they, who upon the apprehenſion of their want of fruits, do looſe or ſlacken their grip of faith, and upon diſcouragment, are ready to depart from the living God.

16. The like wiſdom is required in dealing with the conſciences of men concerning the preparatory diſpoſitions of ſuch as may confidently come unto Chriſt to be juſtified, ſanctified and ſaved; for albeit it be true, that all that come to Chriſt, ought to come in the ſenſe of their ſin and acknowledgment of wrath and death deſerved for their ſins, ought to come with contrition of heart, with godly ſorrow for their ſins, and a humble renunciation of all confidence in themſelves; yet muſt not ſuch perſons, as do not ſatisfie themſelves in the meaſure or ſincerity of ſuch preparatory diſpoſitions in themſelves, be keeped back, or debarred from coming to Chriſt, becauſe they not only want, as they conceive, both the humiliation and ſorrow of heart for ſin, and fear of wrath, required in ſuch as have acceſſe unto Chriſt, but alſo do perceive in themſelves ſuch blindneſſe of mind and vanity thereof, ſuch ſtupidity of conſcience and ſtubbornneſſe of a proud heart,

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as is not fit (as they conceive) to be received by Christ, or fit to be comforted by him; such persons I say are not to be forthwith debarred from coming to the throne of grace; for, oft-times sincerity of conviction, compunction and humiliation is to be found in such as are displeased with their own short-coming in such preparatory dispositions, more then in many others who make a fairer shew and profession of their godly sorrow and humiliation, and are well pleased with themselves in that respect. We must be wary also while we require sorrow and humiliation, and other like preparatory dispositions in them who may come unto Christ, least we secretly import and insinuat a sort of merit to be in such dispositions, so as if he that doth not perceive himself thus qualified, could expect no good at Christs hands, except he have in his hand such preparatory dispositions as if it were a price of purchasing adresse to Christ. But let us hold this fast, that the more poor and empty a man be in his own eyes, he ought to draw the more near unto the riches of grace in Christ, because in him only are to be found all the treasures of every saving grace. and preparatory dispositions for receiving thereof; he is that *exalted Prince, who giveth repentance unto Israel*, Act. 5. 31. he is the author and finisher of faith, unto whom all they, who in the sense of their want of repentance and faith, do sigh in themselves, ought, and safely may come, that they may have from him a more ample measure of faith and repentance. Neither need we in this case be feared, least any such person go or be sent too soon unto Christ, and that the teacher of this doctrine be found to foster presumption, and to offer untimous consolation; for, it is one thing to direct a man to go to Christ, for supply of whatsoever good is wanting in him, and another thing to warrand a secure sinner to lay hold on the consolations of the Gospel, which God hath reserved in his own hand, to be dispensed in due time and order, to the truly humble penitent.

The Lord knoweth how to deal with ſuch as come unto him; he can hold an unhumbled ſupplicant praying and knocking at heavens door without giving him a comfortable anſwer untill he be humbled, and ſo prepare him by humiliation for conſolation in due time.

True it is, that many draw near to Chriſt with their lips while their hearts are far away, and remain ſenſleſſe of their evil eſtate and condition, and are far from the earneſt deſire of the remedy which is to be had in Chriſt: and therefore it is, not without cauſe, that Paſtors in their ſermons require the ſight and ſenſe of ſin, and hunger and thirſt for righteouſneſſe in them who come to Chriſt, and deſire to profit by their coming to him: for, albeit it be free to God, without antecedent preparatory exerciſes, to fall in upon mans heart ſuddainly, and at one ſermon both convince him of ſin, and lead him in to Chriſt, as he hath ſometime dealt with a multitude, when *Peter* was preaching, *Act.* 2. yet it is not free for men to neglect their duties, when they are advertiſed that the order of Gods working ordinarily, is, to take a time for information of their mind concerning their natural miſery, and his gracious way of delivery, and for a time to work on their hearts by the law, before he give them the felt fruits of the Goſpel. Mean time this muſt be remembred, that no man, diſpleaſed with his diſpoſition, as not fitted for mercy, and who doth regrate that he is a ſtupid ſinner, and ſo hard-hearted that he cannot repent: ſhould be keeped off, and debarred from going to Chriſt, till he diſcern in himſelf the contrition and humiliation of heart which he would have: for, this were as much as to ſay in effect, that before a ſinner may go to Chriſt, he muſt ſeek, not from Chriſt, but out of his own ſtrength and abilities to work up his own heart to the ſenſe of ſin and humiliation of heart, and other ſuch like diſpoſitions, as ordinarily go before the act and diſcerning of ſaving faith; for, if even *Simon Magus*, diſcovered and found out to be in

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the gall of bitterneſſe and bond of iniquity, was exhorted to pray that God would forgive his ſins, and remove the perverſeneſſe of his heart and ſave him from deſerved wrath, *Act.* 8. 22. How much more are they to be encouraged to go to Chriſt for relief from theſe evils which they feel and fear, in whom not only this gall of bitterneſſe doth not appear, but alſo ſome appearances may be marked, by wiſe beholders, of a begun work of grace in them, albeit the man himſelf cannot perceive ſo much for the time?

17. Seing it is certain, that God doth prevein by grace every converted mans actions, before the man do actually turn himſelf to God, and that the Lord uſeth to open the eyes of the man whom he is converting, to ſee ſuch and ſuch evils in himſelf before theſe evils be taken away; and ſeing it is Gods uſual way by preventing, to give ſo ne meaſure of the good to be prayed for, that the man may pray for more good upon the receit of ſome meaſure of that good already beſtowed; therefore all they who deſire to approach to Chriſt, muſt be taught to make, obſerve and take notice of the leaſt degree of good beſtowed upon them, of the ſmalleſt beginnings of illumination, of the meaneſt degrees of conviction for ſin, of the leaſt meaſure of eſtimation of Chriſt and his grace wrought already in themſelves, and to thank the Lord for ſo much eye-ſalve as hath opened their eyes to diſcern their own blindneſſe and miſery, and Chriſt to be the remedy of all the evils they do ſee; and after they have marked what is beſtowed already on them, and have bleſſed God for the gift, they muſt be exhorted to requeſt the Lord to make out and perfect the begun mercy, that they may be ſure of their own real converſion; for ſo doth the new convert pray, *Jer.* 31. 18. *Convert me, and I ſhall be converted*; and the humble ſoul, *Cant.* 1. 4. *draw me after thee, and we will run after thee.* And this we ſpeak not, as if any unconverted man could in the ſenſe of his ſin and miſery ſincerely and heartily ſeek

after Christ, or for more grace from him. But because some that are converted, do not perceive that they are converted, we frame our speech to their estimation of themselves, that they may be edified who are brought unto Christ, by the draught of effectual calling, and have not as yet received the gift of the Spirit to perceive these things which are freely bestowed upon them, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12.

18. As it useth to be in the sickness of the body, So it falleth out in the sicknesses of the conscience, that as there are some sicknesses simple, and other some complicat, when moe sicknesses concur together; So in the conscience, there are some simple, some complicat ill cases. Simple and single cases of conscience are these, wherein the diseased soul is troubled with one doubt only for the present: as for example, when the party afflicted, is doubtfull only of the will of God toward him, and not of his power: such was the case of the Leper, *Matth.* 8. 2. *Thou canst make me clean, if thou wilt.*

Complicat and involved cases, are, when many evils concur together, and the conscience is troubled with many doubts. In which case many questions may offer themselves in a throng together, which the afflicted party cannot well distinguish, and thereupon is driven to darkness and confusion of mind. In this case the Pastor, or prudent christian friend, must observe some order, beginning with the most perilous doubt, that it may be first solved: which doubt being answered in the first place, let him fall upon the answering of the rest of the doubts in order. As for example, if the party be afflicted with tentations unto desperation, let him be cleared and led by the hand to see and acknowledge a possibility of salvation by Christ. and then a *probability* and *appearance* that it shall be, by an argument taken from his present exercise, which putteth an earand in his hand, and so a warrand, to go to Christ; and so peece and peece let him

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be dealt with to accept the general offer of grace in Christ and to believe in him. Now that such may be the exercise of the child of God, appeareth, *Psal.* 42. 7. *Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of thy water-spouts, all thy waves and billows are gone over me.* And *Psal.* 77. 7, 8. *Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his grace clean gone for ever? and will he be favourable no more?* &c. At last he discovereth his duty to believe in God, and concludeth against himself, that his giving so far way to the tentation was his infirmity.

19. We must distinguish worldy sorrow, and hypochondriack-passions and perturbations of mind, from cases of conscience, and spiritual exercise in the wrestlings of faith, that for a natural disease and distemper a pertinent remedy may be called for from the bodily Physicians; and to such as are under a spiritual exercise, the doubts of their conscience may be prudently loused. In such a case, when both the bodily distemper and spiritual exercise are joyned, circumspection is necessary, that proportionable remedies be used by the Physician and the Pastor or prudent friend, that bodily medicine and spirtiual consolations may be each in their own time and order wisely made use of: and because it useth to fall out, that exercise of conscience and distemper of bodily humours are oftentimes joyned one with another, let it be sufficient, that a word is casten in here for advertisement.

20. In curing cases of conscience, it is not sufficient to louse some one doubt or other, but after satisfaction given to the parties afflicted concerning the present case, which hath troubled them, they must learn to observe other causes, which may trouble them afterward, wherewith for the present they possibly are not troubled, and must be directed to acquaint themselves, with Christ, that in him they may have relief from every sin, and every sort of misery; and to that end and purpose they must consecrat and devout themselves

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to him, to depend upon him in all things, and at all times, whatſoever way he ſhall be pleaſed to exerciſe them: for, whoſoever do come unto Chriſt, muſt come of ſet purpoſe to abide in him, and never depart from him, but to live in him, and draw grace after grace out of his fulneſſe; grace to mortifie ſin, grace to renew the acts of faith and repentance daily, according as they find new guiltineſſe contracted, and weakneſſe in themſelves to do commanded duties: for, except they do ſo, they ſhall eaſily ſlide back from their begun ſanctification, and furniſh mater to Sathan for raiſing of new doubts in their ſouls and new tentations unto ſins, wherein they have not fallen before: therefore muſt they keep the habits of faith and repentance in actual exerciſe daily.

21. In dealing with a troubled conſcience, let not the comforter, whether a Paſtor or a prudent friend, truſt to his abilities, or arrogat to himſelf above what is due to him, but let him keep his eye upon the Lord and in his heart be praying to God to bleſſe the Word in his mouth, giving glory to God expreſly, if he perceive the afflicted party laying hold on Gods Word delivered by him. And let him alſo teach the afflicted to lift his eyes to the Lord, when the Word of conſolation is diſpenſed to him by the Miniſter or prudent friend, that God may have the glory in his conſolation, and no more aſcribed to the inſtrument then is due: For, the Miniſter may ſow the ſeed and plant, and water, but God only can give the increaſe: men are ready to fail in this point and mar the bleſſing, for God is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another.

22. In caſe the expected conſolation be not found, or the doubt propounded be not ſolved ſo ſoon as is deſired, let the afflicted be exhorted, that he make not haſt in ſeeking comfort, but patiently ſubmit himſelf to Gods will in exerciſing him for a while, and humble himſelf under his mighty hand, in meekneſſe waiting for

for clearneſſe and comfort in due time; for, affliction is ſent to work patience, and patience to work experience, and experience to work hope, which ſhall not make the patient man aſhamed: and it is far better for a ſoul to lye for a time in the bonds of affliction, till it be daunted and ſubdued, then before patience hath had the perfect work, to ſeek to have its fooliſh wiſhes granted unto it: for if once a ſoul heartily ſubmit it ſelf to God, or ſtrive to ſubmit, and patiently wait on, conſolation will be found not far off.

23. In regard the work of the holy Ghoſt, working the converſion of a man, may begin before it can be marked, it is the part of him who medleth with the afflicted conſcience, to deal tenderly with the afflicted, and ſo to temper his ſpeech, as he may both further repentance and faith, pre-ſuppoſing the parties exerciſe may prove a begun work of grace; for, it is better ſo to judge in charity of Gods diſpenſation, then to ſoſter ſiniſter ſuſpicions of the party afflicted, which may readily break forth in ſome unhappy expreſſions to the hurting of the patient, and hindering his profiting by what may be ſaid beſide.

24. Becauſe we have to do in this Book with the weak believers, who, in the ſenſe of ſin and deſerved wrath, are fled or flying unto Chriſt, with a purpoſe of amendment of life, but do fear they are not, or ſhall not be admitted into that kingdom of our Lord Jeſus, for this and that pretended reaſon: therefore, it will be to purpoſe in comforting them, to make uſe, as of other Scriptures, ſo in ſpecial of theſe two paſſages; the one, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. the other, 1 *Cor.* 1, 30. the one ſerving to convince them, that they are already in the ſtate of grace, and of the number of believers in Chriſt, how ſtrongly ſoever they are aſſaulted with fears, doubts and ſuſpicions, that it is otherwayes; for, in this paſſage, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. the Apoſtle ſummeth up the whole Goſpel in few words, holding forth, firſt, that the fulneſſe of God in three perſons, was in the ſecond perſon of the God-

God-head the Mediator Christ Jesus, and is, upon the work of reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their transgressions unto them, that receive the gracious offer of reconciliation tendred through Christ in the Gospel. Secondly, that God in Christ hath committed unto his Ministers the word of reconciliation, that they, with authority, may offer reconciliation and friendship with God unto the hearers of the Word of the Gospel. Thirdly, that the Apostles and Ministers of the Gospel, are sent forth and directed as Embassadors, to exhort and request men, in Gods name, and in the name of Christ God Mediator manifested in the flesh, to be reconciled unto God. Fourthly, that so many as do consent unto and imbrace the gracious offer of reconciliation, are reckoned to be believers, even all they who do acknowledge their natural enimity and sins against God, and do welcom the message of reconciliation, (sent by the Ministers of the Gospel) and do ingage themselves to hold fast this Covenant, aiming to walk as reconciled children and servants unto God, uprightly laying forth their burdens and desires before him daily: all these (I say) are believers in Christ, and may assure themselves of reconciliation; for there is no more in the Apostles and Ministers commission required, for entering of the humbled sinner into a covenant of friendship, save this, we request you in Gods name, and in the name of God incarnat, Jesus Christ the Mediatour, we beseech you be reconciled to God, v. 20. Now we judge, that humbled sinners fled to Christ, and purposing to amend their lives by his grace, will not be found unwilling to accept this offer of reconciliation, but will declare their hearty consent to this offer; and so may be convinced, that a covenant is closed between God and them, and that God hath given unto them saving faith, how weak soever it seemeth unto them; for, the consenting unto, and accepting of, this offer, is the condition required for entering in covenant, and the proper act of saving faith.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, the Apoſtle holdeth forth the ground-right of this covenant, and reaſon whereupon the ſinner, fled to Chriſt, may be aſſured of juſtification: becauſe in the covenant of Redemption, paſt between God in three perſons on the one hand, and the ſecond perſon of the God-head as Mediator and perfect Redeemer by price-paying on the other hand, it is agreed, finally ended and decreed, that Chriſts ſatisfaction, made for the imbracer of this offered reconciliation, ſhall as certainly make the believer judicially righteous and juſtifie him, as Chriſt was judicially made ſin or a ſacrifice for the ſins of the redeemed: for, *God*, ſaith he, *v.* 21. *hath made Chriſt to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* Therefore, as Chriſt the only Mediator, by accepting the covenant of Redemption, had the ſins of the redeemed imputed unto him, (albeit there was no ſin at all, nor could be in him) and was puniſhed for them unto the death of the croſſe; So, the humbled ſinner, by flying unto Chriſt, and accepting the offered covenant of reconciliation, hath Chriſts ſatisfaction imputed unto him, (albeit he can ſee nothing in himſelf but a maſſe of inherent ſin) and ſhall not enter into condemnation, but be brought to life-eternal, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Both the covenant of Redemption made with Chriſt in the Redeemers name, and the covenant of Reconciliation made with us through Chriſt, are of Gods making, and ſo muſt ſtand, and cannot be diſ-annulled for ever.

The other place, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. holdeth forth the right which God hath made to the believer, unto the unſearchable riches of Chriſt, whereunto the weakeſt believer, fled from ſin and wrath unto Chriſt, as the refuge and perfect remedy from both, may claim, namely wiſdom, righteouſneſſe, ſanctification and redemption by him: and that by covenant and decree regiſtrat in this and other places of Scripture, as judicially declared and adjudged unto all and every believer in him; So that they may and ſhould make uſe of Chriſt,

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as made unto them *wisdom* to direct them, *justification* to justifie them, *sanctification* to perfect them peece and peece in holineſſe, and *redemption* to ſupport them under, and deliver them from, all bonds of miſery.

For the better underſtanding of this rich paſſage, we ſhall take it up in four ſentences pronounced from the holy Spirit by the Apoſtle; in every one whereof, theſe three things are inſinuat and imported, firſt, our need of Chriſt; 2. his ingaged help and ſupply; and, 3. our duty to lay hold upon and make uſe of him, according to the right and intereſt in him, made unto every believer.

The firſt ſentence is this, *Chriſt is made unto us wiſdom*, which importeth, firſt, that not only we are by nature blind and ignorant of our ſin and miſery, blind and ignorant of the way of ſalvation and right maner of ſerving God; but alſo after that we are illuminat by grace, and made in ſome meaſure to know our laſt condition and to flye unto Chriſt for delivery, we are compaſſed about with much darkneſſe and foggy miſts of doubts, errors and miſtakes, and have need to be in every ſtep of our way directed and powerfully taught by Chriſts Word and Spirit, to know what is that good and acceptable will of God.

Secondly, it importeth, that as Chriſt is the treaſure of all wiſdom and knowledge who hath revealed in the Scriptures the whole counſell of God concerning our ſalvation; So he is judicially made over unto us as anointed Prophet to his Church, to make known unto us the way of life by his Word and Spirit.

Thirdly, it imports our duty to receive him as the great gift of God, and to give up our ſelves to his teaching, to imploy him and depend upon him as Prophet appointed to us for direction by his Word, what to believe and how to live before God. Whereupon the weakeſt believer may truſt in him for guiding them in the uſe of the Scripture and exerciſe of the means appointed by him unto ſalvation; becauſe he is made of

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God unto us *wisdom*, and intimation thereof is made by his Apostle.

The second sentence is this, *Christ is made of God unto us righteousnesse*: which presupponeth, first, that we are by nature destitute of righteousnesse, condemned as unrighteous by the law, and unable to deliver our selves from condemnation, and when we are fled to Christ and delivered from condemnation, that we are not able to stand in that state, but by our daily sins wherein we fall, do deserve to be condemned as unrighteous.

Secondly, it imports, that Christ is not only righteous in himself and able to satisfie divine justice for our sins, but also hath undertaken to pay, and actually hath payed the price of our redemption by his obedience unto the Father even to the death of the Crosse, and hath taken on him the office of high Priest to apply unto us absolution from our sins, make us accepted and to be dealt with as righteous, and to keep us in that blessed estate by his intercession.

Thirdly, it imports our duty to lay hold on Christ our Cautioner, by vertue of our right and interest in him, granted and intimat unto us, and so to rest on him, that whatsoever Sathan, Conscience, or Law violat by us, shall say, we who are fled from sin and wrath to him, may oppose this sentence of our absolution registrat here, Christ is made unto us *righteousnesse* judicially, by the decree and decreet of God.

The third sentence is this, *Christ is made unto us of God sanctification*, which presupponeth, that in the justified believer there are remaining still the reliques of sin inherent, from which we are not able of our selves to deliver our selves, but have need of divine power to mortifie sin in us, and to repair the image of God by increasing holinesse in us.

Secondly, it importeth, that Christ the Mediator, the holy one of *Israel*, hath not only payed the price of our redemption for removing of our guiltinesse and saving

saving us from condemnation, but also hath undertaken to the Father to write his law in our heart, and at last to present us perfect without spot or blemish, for which end, he hath taken by appointment the threefold office of Prophet, Priest and King.

Thirdly, it imports, that it is our duty to lay hold upon this rich gift and right intimat unto us judicially from God, and whatsoever commanded duty we are to go about, we do it in the name of Christ, sucking by faith, sap and vertue from him to bring forth good fruits holy and acceptable to God through him: Because Christ, the second person of the God-head incarnat, is made unto us, and judicially intimat from God to us, our *sanctification.*

The fourth sentence is this, *Christ is made of God unto us redemption*: which importeth, first, that we who have fled from sin and wrath unto Christ, and are justified by faith, and begun to be sanctified, are yoked in a warfare with our sinfull flesh, the world and Sathan, being subject to many miseries in this life, and to death natural and the grave: In which warfare we are not of our selves able to stand, nor to deliver our selves from the miseries whereunto we are subject, except by divine power we be supported, brought thorow and saved.

Secondly, it imports, that Christ not only hath payed a satisfactory price for our redemption, and is able to deliver us from all sin and misery against the power of whatsoever adversary; but also, that he hath undertaken the work, and hath by compact with the Father, obliged himself to deliver us powerfully from all sin and misery and to overcome to our behoove all our enemies and tread them underfoot, and that he is judicially established in his kingly office, and made over to us for our assurance by decreet intimat to us.

Thirdly, it importeth our duty, that by vertue of the right and gift of Christ God-man, made over unto

unto us by Gods decreet now intimat, we ſhould rely by faith on him, as the pledge of perfecting our ſalvation throughly, and fight out our battels, againſt all adverſar powers and all miſeries, in his ſtrength, rejoycing in his victory over all our enemies; for, God hath made him unto us *redemption*.

CHAP. II.

Wherein the regenerat mans doubt of his being in the ſtate of grace, by reaſon of his felt unworthineſſe, is anſwered.

THeſe premiſed conſiderations, may ſerve for the more eaſie ſolution of doubts and particular caſes wherein the regenerat man may be troubled about his being in the ſtate of grace. For which end, it is needfull alſo, by way of example, to propound ſome uſual queſtions in particular: the anſwering whereof, may ſerve to anſwer all queſtions, which do ariſe from the like original: For,

1. Howſoever it be certain from Scripture, that the regenerat ſhall not periſh, and that their ſtate in grace is unchangeable, and that their perſeverance in the faith is eſtabliſhed by Chriſts undertaking to make them perſevere according to the charge given unto him from the Father, *Joh.* 6. 39 40. yet, it is true alſo, that every regenerat man is not clear about his regeneration, and many regenerat perſons have only a conjectural opinion that they are regenerat, who are not come up as yet to an aſſurance and perſwaſion of their bleſſed eſtate. And the number is not great of theſe who alwaies, or any long time together, do injoy that ſerenity and tranquility of conſcience, that they can confidently triumph, and glory with the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 5. 3, 4, 5. becauſe of deſertions and tentations, raiſing doubts in their conſcience, concerning their eſtate, oft-times holy perſons are diſquieted. With ſuch perſons, while they are in that caſe, a Paſtor or a prudent friend muſt deal ſo, as he would deal with

the infirm, and with them who think themselves not converted, because the same remedies will serve to strengthen a weak believer and to draw a soul, sensible of sin, and under the pangs of the new birth, unto faith in Christ.

2. But let us come more particularly to examine the doubts of some that are regenerat, and their pretended reasons for their doubting. Some are so sensible of their own unworthinesse, that they question it themselves, or any like unto themselves, can be in the state of grace, mean time their carriage is such as becometh a Christian, blameless: I feel in me (saith one) such strength of inward corruption as doth defile every best action I go about; I see what holinesse is required in those that approach unto God, that I do utterly loath my self, as unworthy to be admitted into the fellowship of God or Christ the holy one of *Israel*: yea (saith another) I think it no small presumption to draw near unto Christ, or count my self among his Saints and followers.

This for a short time was the case of *Isaiah*, when in a vision he saw the glory of Christ in the Temple, and heard the Seraphims proclaim him thrice holy, *Isa.* 6. 5. *Wo is me* (said he) *for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hostes.* This also was the case of *Peter*, who in the sense of his own unworthinesse, wakened up by the shining of the glory of Christs God-head in the miraculous tack of fishes, *Luk.* 5 8. falling down at Christs knees, he cryeth *depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinfull man*: which is as much as if he had said, I am utterly unworthy to be admitted unto fellowship with thy holy Majesty. The like also was the case of the Publican in the parable, *Luk.* 18. 13. out of which case, after some wrestling of faith, he cometh forth toward God, yet standing a far off, not daring to lift up his eyes to heaven: wherein is pointed out to us the

sense

ſenſe of his unworthineſſe, hindering him to approach confidently to the throne of grace.

3. For removing of this doubt, five or ſix conſiderations may be repreſented to the party afflicted, with this *proviſo*, that the ſenſe of his unworthineſſe be not diſcharged, or diminiſhed, but wiſely entertained in him rather; for, it is not to be preſuppoſed, that any man can eſteem himſelf ſo unworthy and far from meriting any good at Gods hand, as he is indeed: But yet his doubt, how he dare or may draw near unto Chriſt becauſe of his felt unworthineſſe may be ſolved. 1. If he conſider the nature and offer made of the covenant of grace, whereby theſe that are ſenſible of their own unworthineſſe, are ſo far from being debarred from the covenant of grace, that the covenant of grace doth not admit any perſon to be received into it, but ſuch only who do renounce all confidence in their own works and worthineſſe, and do flye unto the offer of the free grace of God in Chriſt: for, our Lord hath ſaid, *Mat.* 9. 13. *I came not to call the righteous but ſinners to repentance*: And the promiſes of the Evangel, are made to the poor in ſpirit, to the hungry, and thirſty for the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, which only can ſatisfie a hungry ſoul, *Mat.* 5. 3, 6. yea, the ſenſe of unworthineſſe is in effect that ſelf-loathing whereof *Ezek.* ſpeaketh, *chap.* 36. 31. which ſenſe of unworthineſſe, may be ſeen in *Job*, as a ſpecial act and evidence of his repentance, *Job.* 42. 6.

Secondly, let him conſider, that becauſe by reaſon of ſin, no worthineſſe can be found in us, therefore God hath freely loved the world and provided grace in Chriſt, that all that flye to him, may out of his fulneſſe receive grace for grace, *Joh.* 1. 16.

Thirdly, the threefold office of a Mediator, wherewith Chriſt hath cloathed himſelf, doth obviat and meet the doubts of the humbled ſoul under the ſenſe of unworthineſſe: for, albeit he be ignorant and ſlow to underſtand and believe the revealed will of God, about mens ſal-

vation, and his prescribed service; yet, upon his flying to Christ, he hath Christ offered and given to him for his wisdom, a Prophet able to inform him, to open his eyes, and perswade him to imbrace by lively faith all saving doctrine. Albeit he be exceeding sinfull and worthy of condemnation, yet he hath Christ as Priest made of God unto him *righteousness* and *sanctification*, upon his flying to him for refuge from sin and wrath, undertaking also powerfully to sanctifie him, by mortifying his corruptions, and perfecting at last the Image of God in him. And albeit he have the world and his own flesh, and the power of all principalities and spiritual wickednesse, with many miseries in this life to wrestle with; yet, he hath Christ Jesus as King, made of God unto him *redemption*, upon his flying to Christ for refuge against all his enemies; So that he may be sure to be found among them whom he hath redeemed by price-paying, and for whom he hath undertaken powerfully to sustain them in all this warfare, whatsoever misery they may be in, and at last to bring them out of all sin and misery to a perfect rest in everlasting glory. And to what end hath our Lord taken on the office of a Mediator and Redeemer, if not to open the eyes of the blind that flye to him for eye-salve, to cover the naked, flying unto him, with the precious garment of his imputed righteousnesse, and to enrich the poor, needy and unworthy out of the store-house of his unsearchable riches of grace? *Rev.* 3. 18.

Fourthly, let him consider the constant course of grace and practical dispensation thereof in all ages toward all the converted. Are not all they to whom the Gospel cometh, in the state of corrupt nature, when God cometh to convert them? For, never was there any person called unto the state of grace, but he was found in his sins and in the state of lost sinners by nature: none but children of wrath and enemies by nature are reconciled; none but they, who, by the law, are condemned, are justified; none but they, that in their own

sense

ſenſe are loſt, do obtain ſalvation; for, Chriſt doth plainly tell us, *I came to ſeek and to ſave them that are loſt.* Did he ever reject any that fled unto him, becauſe they were unworthy? No; for it is ſaid, *Pſ.* 9.10. *They that know thy name will truſt in thee; for thou never forſook them that ſought thee.* And, (*Joh.* 6.37.) he ſaith, *Theſe that come unto me, I will in no caſe caſt out.* 2 Tim. 1.9. *Not according to our works, but according to his own purpoſe and grace, hath he called us.*

Fifthly, let him conſider the worthineſſe of Chriſts perſon and merits, who, (becauſe he being God and man in one perſon, hath paid a price of infinit value for redemption of ſinners who flye unto him) is worthy, for whoſe cauſe, the unworthy ſinner, flying to the throne of grace, ſhould be received in favour, and made fit for eternal life by the ſanctification of his Spirit.

Sixthly, let him conſider, that if he ſtand a-back from Chriſt, and do not flye unto him, how unworthy ſoever he think himſelf, he remains under wrath and the condemnatory ſentence of the law, *Joh.* 1.8. but, let him rather remember, that he is warranted by a command of God the Father, to flye to Chriſt, 1 *Joh.* 3.23. *This is his commandment, that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son, Jeſus Chriſt, and love one another as he hath commanded us.* And therefore, let him ſay of his own ſoul with the Centurion, ſpeaking of his ſervant to Chriſt, (*Luke* 7.6, 7.) *I am not worthy that thou ſhould come under my roof; but ſay the word, and my ſervant ſhall be healed.* The word is ſaid frequently in Scripture, let the afflicted reſt himſelf on it.

CHAP. III.

Wherein the regenerat mans doubts, ariſing from the multitude and weight of his ſins againſt the Law and the Goſpel, and againſt the light of his conſcience, are anſwered.

AS in the pangs of the new birth, this doubt hath much weight to keep a ſoul a-back from imbra-

ing Christ and receiving pardon through him; So after a man is regenerat, and made quiet in his conscience, when through sad affliction and sore temptation, these wounds of his conscience begin to bleed again, his pardon and peace is called in question. Of this exercise there are three degrees: the first is, when sins against the law are mustered, and led in an hoste against a soul; which was the case of the afflicted Psalmist for a time, till by faith he over-came the doubt, *Ps.* 40. 12. *Innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold on me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more then the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me.*

The second degree is, when beside the mans sins against the Law, his sins also against the Gospel, against Christ and the means of salvation, do arise in battel against him, and do drive him to cry out, with these not yet converted sinners, (*Act.* 2. 37.) *men and brethren, what shall we do?*

The third degree is, when the regenerat man, for some grosse sins against the light of his conscience, is given up for a time to be scourged with the temptations and accusations of Sathan, as if he had sinned against the holy Ghost, and no more mercy were reserved for him; and this was the case of the Prophet *Jonah*, when being guilty and conscious to his late rebellion against God, he is pursued and apprehended by God, and castен in the sea, he falleth in a fit of desperation till God gave him victory by faith, *Jon.* 2. 4. *Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again to thy holy Temple*: which was the trysting place of God with sinners in a Mediator. This was also the case of *David* for a time, after that his conscience is wakened by the message of God sent unto him in the mouth of *Nathan* the Prophet, when he found the spirit of consolation with-drawn from him, and the wrath of God breaking his bones and consuming the marrow thereof, *Ps.* 51. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice,* &c.

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2. In answering this doubt, we must proceed sutably to each degree severally. In curing this case in the first degree, let the afflicted admit all the just aggravations of his sins against the Law, which the conscience doth presse: for, by extenuation of sin, neither is Gods justice glorified, nor the conscience satisfied; and consolation or hope of remission of sin must not arise from the few number or lightnesse of sins, but from the multitude and largenesse of Gods mercy: and therefore, we must not cut short the reckoning with the Lords law, nor must we diminish the weight and estimation of our evil deservings; but course must be taken, that by the sense of guiltinesse, the judgment of the afflicted person be not so confounded and perplexed, as if his case were desperat, and possibility of salvation were passed; but rather let the afflicted humble himself under the mighty hand of God, who alone can destroy and make alive, and who usually bringeth down to death and brink of hell, and bringeth back again, and who alone doth work wonders.

This doubt then arising from the multitude of sins, may be loosed, first, by a fresh consideration of the infinit excellency and worthinesse of Christ Jesus, God manifested in the flesh, and of the incomprehensible value of the price of redemption, payed by him for all who flye unto him: for, the Father hath declared himself satisfied by him in behalf of the redeemed, for whom he did offer himself, *Matth.* 3. 17. saying, *This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* And (*Heb.* 7. 25.) *This is he, who is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him.* Secondly, by consideration of the infinit largenesse of Gods bounty, grace and mercy, wherein he hath set no bounds to himself in pardoning and abolishing the sins of those that come unto him, how grosse and grievous soever they have been, *Isa.* 44. 22. *I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins, return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.* And, (*Isa.* 1. 18.) *Come now and let us*

reason together, saith the Lord, *though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool.* And (*Matth.* 11. 28.) *Come unto me*, saith Christ, *all ye that labour and are heavy loaden, and I will give you rest.*

Thirdly, by the consideration of the many examples and experiences of the mercy of God manifested in the pardon of hainous sinners, both in the old and new Testament, set down in Scripture, of set purpose to invite such as are troubled with the sense of their manifold sins, to come unto Christ the Mediator, or to God in Christ reconciling the world to himself, by not imputing sins to them who embrace the offer of grace and reconciliation tendered unto them in the Gospel.

As to the second degree wherein the doubt is augmented by the addition of the sins against the Gospel, unto the sins against the Law, by despiseing or slighting the means of salvation offered in the Gospel; true it is, that the despising or slighting of the offer of grace in Christ, cannot be sufficiently aggreged, because the sins of *Sodom* and *Gomorah* will be found lighter, being laid in the ballance with the contempt of the Gospel, *Matth.* 10. 14, 15. yet, notwithstanding, when God is entered in reckoning with a sinner, and is begun to challenge him for his sins against the Law and the Gospel also, and hath by his terror humbled the man, there is mercy insinuated unto that person in the bosome of the threatening. Wherefore the soul born down with the sense of ill-deserving by his sins against both Law and Gospel, must be exhorted to humble himself before God, and flye in unto Christ, who of set purpose that he might answer this doubt, hath declared, that whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him, to wit, if he repent this injury done to Christ, *Matth.* 12. 32. and he standeth knocking at the door of luke-warm *Laodicea*, with an offer of coming in to them, and supping with them, that shall

ſhall open to him, notwithſtanding they have ſlighted him long in their ſenſleſſeneſſe of ſin, nakedneſſe and miſery.

As to the third degree, wherein the afflicted doth ſuſpect, that he hath ſinned againſt the holy Ghoſt, becauſe he hath ſinned againſt the light of his conſcience, and ditement of the holy Spirit, let the afflicted conſider, that the ſinning in actual groſſe out-breakings againſt the light of the conſcience, is indeed a high provocation of God to his face, for which the offender is to be humbled all the dayes of his life. Secondly, let him learn to glorifie Gods Juſtice, who hath made a proud rebell to be ſcourged with ſcorpions, and ſore bitten with the remorſe of a ſlighted and contemned conſcience.

Thirdly, let thoſe particular tranſgreſſions, objected to be done againſt the light of the conſcience, be examined with their motives and circumſtances: and out of the bitter rod of Gods correcting the offender, that he ſhould not periſh with the world, let the afflicted take up the Lords love in judging him, that he may not be condemned. As alſo let the Paſtor, or the prudent friend, who goeth about to comfort the afflicted, carefully obſerve if the afflicted be grieved for grieving of the holy Spirit, if he deſire and long after the conſolation of God, whom he hath offended, if he purpoſe to walk more circumſpectly afterward, and ſhew the ſnare he hath been taken into, or what other evidences of repentance can be ſeen in him, whereof uſe may be made to aſſure the afflicted, that he hath not ſinned unto death. Becauſe the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, as it is deſcribed unto us in holy Scripture, is either a malicious refuſing and oppoſing wittingly and wilfully of Chriſt Jeſus, after that the Spirit of Chriſt hath convinced the perſon, that Chriſt is the Redeemer; and this was the ſin of ſome Phariſees, deſperat, profeſſed, and irreconciliable enemies to Chriſt, *Mat.* 12. 24. to 33. or, it is a totall apoſtaſie from Chriſt

Christ after they have known him to be the Redeemer, joyned with a malitious oppugning of the christian Religion, as it is set forth, *Heb.* 10. 26, 27. to 32. and whosoever falleth in this sin, he neither repents him of it, nor desires to repent or be reconciled with God.

And therefore, let the humbled and afflicted penitent, longing to be reconciled unto God through Christ, and to find the sense of his favour granted or restored, not suspect himself any more guilty of this sin, but let him make use of the offer of grace in the Gospel and of the example of penitents mentioned in Scripture. Who knoweth how soon the Lord may take the penitent in his fatherly embracements and comfort him abundantly? Mean time, till the sensible comfort be given unto him, let him hold fast the promises made to them that flye unto Christ.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein is solved the doubt of the regenerat man, raised by his suspicion, whether he be elected or not.

IT cometh to passe sometimes, that a sinner lamenting his sins, and seeking liberation from sin and misery, doth call in question whether he be regenerat, because he hath a deep and fixed suspicion, that he shall possibly be found not among the Elect, and by consequence be found a reprobat: of whom if ye ask a reason why he saith so, he can give no solid answer, only he will tell you he can perceive no certain signs and evidences of his election: yea, that he findeth nothing in himself, but that which may be found in reprobats, and that he is affraid he be found one of that number, and that this suspicion hath taken deep root in him, that he cannot rid himself of this doubt and fear.

2. This case, we must confesse, is very dangerous, except it be timously cured; for, here faith is taken as it were by the throat, and the ground of hope is like

like to be razed. The ſuſpicion of Gods decree is dayly foſtered and augmented, and the afflicted perſon, not only doubteth of Gods good-will to him, but is tempted unto deſperation: By this means the command of God to believe the promiſes and conſolations of the Goſpel, ſeem to him to be offered to him all in vain: the hope of ſucceſſe, or profiting in the uſe of the means appointed by God, is undermined, ſo long as this ſuſpicion is entertained; yea, all the exerciſes of religion become burthenſome, out of a fear he ſhall follow the exerciſe thereof to no purpoſe; and ſo the duties of religion, are oft-times left undone, or caſt off for a time, if the tentation grow ſtrong, and continue with him without cure or comfort; thus he ſtandeth upon the border and precipice of ſome ſort of deſperation, if his fear and ſuſpicion be not removed in ſome meaſure.

3. For cure of this caſe, the Paſtor or prudent friend, as in all his conferences with the afflicted, So here in ſpeciall, muſt ſeriouſly pray to God, that he would bleſſe the means of information and conſolation, which he is about to uſe for the ſatisfying of the afflicted.

To this end therefore, firſt, let all the reaſons whereby the afflicted pretendeth to make his reprobation probable, be reſumed and refuted as frivolous all of them. And certainly, they cannot but be found frivolous, becauſe God hath not given any certain evidence or ſign of reprobation, ſo long as a man is alive, except that ſin unto death, the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, in a malicious refuſing, rejecting and hoſtile oppoſing of Jeſus Chriſt wittingly and willingly: for, as to finall unbelief and impenitency, no man can paſſe ſentence upon any perſon, that hath heard any thing of the Goſpel, ſo long as breath is in him; for, God can convert a ſoul to himſelf in the pangs of imminent death, as he did the thief on the croſſe.

All the evil which the afflicted can ſay of himſelf, cannot prove him a reprobat, the hight which his reckoning

reckoning can rise unto to fortifie his own suspicion of himself, is only to give appearance that he is not regenerat; mean time we presuppone the afflicted person under this tentation, to labour under the sense of manyfold sins (which do furnish strength unto the tentation) and to be hungry and thirsty for righteousnesse; and to be desirous to draw near to God in Christ, if he could be delivered of his suspicion of Gods purpose and affection towards him. And therefore his christian friends are bound in charity to expound this his hunger for righteousnesse, and thirsty desire of reconciliation through Christ, to be a begun work of gracious regeneration, and so also a hopefull sign that he is elected.

Secondly, after refutation of his pretended reasons for his suspicion and fear, this suspicion must be set before him as a strong tentation of Sathan, and a soul-murthering lie, thrown as a fiery dart at him, (such as the Apostle, *Ephes. 6.* maketh mention of) of set purpose to beat the shield of faith out of his hand: Wherefore he must be exhorted to resist the Tempter, and that so much the more, as Sathan out of envy and malice doth slander God, and the begun work of grace in the man, and all to vex the soul of him whom he cannot keep in his snare.

Thirdly, the giving so much way to this wicked suggestion, must be represented to the patient as an act of ignorance and folly, yea an act of iniquity and injury unto God, and to his own soul: for, what a madnesse is it to pry in upon the secret counsell of God, and to neglect his revealed will set down in Scripture? what presumption to intrude our selves upon his secret decrees, and to cast behind our back his open commands given to us? To refuse obedience to Gods ordinances given to us for our salvation, except he shall first tell us what is his purpose about us in particular? To open our ears to the false suggestions of the devil a lyar, and murtherer from the beginning, and stop

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our ears from hearing the voice of God speaking to us in Scripture? Wherefore, let the afflicted under this temptation take heed to what is said, *Deut. 29. 29. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but these things that are revealed belong unto us and our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this Law.* Let the Lords Command be first obeyed, and then the decree of God concerning the believer in him, shall be timeously revealed: for, his promises are agreeable with his decrees, and his promises are offered to us, that thereby his decrees may be brought on unto a just and gracious execution.

Fourthly, let the afflicted call to minde, what benefits the Lord hath bestowed upon him from his infancy, and in special, that he hath offered, and doth continue to offer, Christ Jesus unto him, if he will receive him for wisdom, righteousnesse, sanctification and redemption; and upon this ground he is bound to give unto God a good construction in every sort of dispensation toward him, and look upon God as his friend and father.

CHAP. V.

Wherein the regenerat mans doubting of his regeneration, because he findeth no power in himself to believe in Christ, is answered.

SOmetime it cometh to passe, that the renewed man, after a long time standing in the state of grace, falleth in doubt about the work of grace in himself, because when God doth change his dispensation toward him, and bringeth him to tryal by trouble, wherein he is found weaker then he expected, he beginneth to suspect whether the former work of grace hath been found or not, and his reason is, because he findeth by experience often repeated, that in straits and difficulties when he would most exercise faith and believe in Christ, he is found least able to do it; yea, he findeth it no lesse impossible to observe the whole moral Law, then solidly

lidly to believe in Christ: hence ariseth anxiety in the soul of the afflicted, while he neither dar depart from Christ, nor yet is able to approach unto him confidently. In this case many new doubts and temptations do arise, which weaken his faith yet more, and hinder him in the exercise of religion and discharge of duties, not a little.

That this sometime may be the case of some converted, the experience of the Saints, set down in Scripture, maketh evident, *Ps.* 30. 7. *Lord, saith David, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled.* And in his prayer, (*Ps.* 61. 2.) while his minde was overwhelmed in him with perplexing thoughts, he findeth in himself no strength or ability to deliver himself or put forth acts of faith on the Mediator, as he would have done, but prayeth, that while he is now exiled and driven far off from the tabernacle and ark of the Covenant, he may be raised up to believe in him who was signified by these tipes, to wit, Christ the Rock of all Salvation: which Rock of salvation, he perceiveth to be a higher mystery then he can discover or ascend upon, without the hand of divine power. And therefore saith, *from the end of the earth, will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher then I.* Yea, the godly afflicted Hebrews fell in this sickness, whom the Apostle exhorteth to take courage unto them, *Heb.* 12. 12, 13. *Wherefore lift up your hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make streight paths for your feet.*

2. For answering of this doubt, the afflicted person must be convinced of his infirmity and sinfull diffidence, because being called of God to the exercise and tryal of his faith in Christ by whatsoever sort of trouble, he hath been discouraged and fainted, which did not become a souldier of Christ, and that for no other pretended reason but this, that he could not give such a proof of his faith as he should have given and hoped to give, before he was put to tryal. Secondly,

Secondly, he must consider how far he is mistaken in leaning to his own strength, in the exercise of his faith; of which self-confidence, the more a man is emptied, the more speedily he shall be furnished, if being emptied he flye to Christ for supply. This was the experience of the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 9. 10. who was made weak in himself, that the strength of Christ might be made perfect in his weakness; and therefore he resolved to make use of the strength of Christ in all his felt infirmities, and that he did, with good successe. For when I am weak, saith he, then am I strong. Whose example we must resolve to follow.

Thirdly, after search, it will be found, that the person afflicted, under the notion and expression of *I cannot believe*, hath, in effect, this meaning, I cannot find such a full assurance of faith as I would be at; or, I cannot find such a sense of the approbation of my faiah as can satisfie me and perswade me that I do believe really in Christ. And so it is another thing, and another gift of the Spirit he is seeking, then what he pretendeth to seek: for, the sense and feeling of approven faith, and full assurance of faith, is not given to every believer, but to him that fights the fight of faith, and in his tryals, adhereth closely to Christ and to his truth, when he is tempted to sin, as the clause in the close of the seven Epistles to the Churches of *Asia* doth teach us, *Rev.* 2. 3. *To him that overcometh, I will give to eat of the tree of life, to eat of that hid manna; I will give him that white stone, and a new name written thereon, which no man knoweth, save he that receiveth it,*

Fourthly, the afflicted must be instructed or put in minde to distinguish between believing in Christ, and the knowing that he doth believe in Christ, as may be learned from 1 *Joh.* 5. 13. *These things I writ to you, that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know, that you have eternal life; and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.* He must distinguish between true (though weak) saving faith and strong faith. True saving

saving faith is in that person, who, being pursued by the Law, doth flye for refuge to lay hold upon Christ the hope set before us. The man that dwelleth in this city of Christ, and maketh use of Christ as the only remedy against sin and misery, as he is offered to us in the Gospel, hath right unto that strong and well-grounded consolation spoken of, *Heb.* 6. 17, 18, 19. True and saving faith is in that person, who acknowledging himself a child of wrath, heartily receiveth the Lord Jesus Christ, as he offereth himself to us in the Gospel; for, such a person hath the right and priviledge of a child of God, and may reckon himself among believers in Christ, *Joh.* 1. 12. *As many as received Christ, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe in his name.* True and saving faith is in that person, who, being convinced of his enimity against God, doth answer the request of God in Christ in the mouth of his Ministers, with a hearty consent unto the covenant of grace and reconciliation offered to all that hear the Gospel, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19, 20. *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are Embassadors, for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead be ye reconciled unto God: for he hath made him* (that is, Christ) *to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* Therefore, let the afflicted answer thus, I receive the offer, and do consent, upon these termes, to be reconciled to God, Lord help my unbelief; for, thou hast said, *seek ye my face*; and my soul answereth *Thy face, O Lord, will I seek, hide not thy face from me*, Ps. 27. 8, 9. He that upon these termes, doth flye to Christ, and resolveth to adhere unto him, needeth not doubt but he is received in the state of grace: for confirmation whereof, let the fruits of faith outward and inward, which may be observed by the afflicted himself, or by his comforter, be called to mind, and let him rest and go on in the course of obedience of the Gospel,

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CHAP. VI.

Wherein the doubt of the regenerat man, concerning his being in the ſtate of grace, ariſing from his apprehended defect of humiliation and ſorrow for ſin, is anſwered.

SOme regenerat perſons will be found, who mourn indeed for their ſin, and do acknowledge, that they deſerve death for their ſins, do confeſſe they ſtand in need of Chriſt, do thirſt for his righteouſneſſe, do deſire earneſtly to be united unto him by faith, do follow the exerciſe of Religion, and do endeavour to keep their conſciences undefiled in all things; and yet for all this, do not only doubt whether they be renewed, but alſo do eſteem it a preſumptuous raſhneſſe in them to approach unto Chriſt, or to caſt themſelves over on him by faith, before they be more ſeriouſly humbled, before they feel a more hearty ſorrow and grief, before they feel the pangs of the new birth more ſharp, before they be more preſſed with the burthen of their ſins, and do feel in themſelves the ſpirit of fear and trembling and bondage in a higher meaſure.

From whom, if you ask a reaſon of their doubt, they ſhall anſwer, that they are not yet called to come unto Chriſt, becauſe theſe are only called to come unto Chriſt who are weary and loaden in the ſuperlative degree, and are ſo born down with the weight of ſin, as they cannot be more, and not deſpair; for ſo do they interpret that ſaying of Chriſt, *Matth.* 11. 28. Chriſt is ſent only to the contrite and broken in heart, who ſit in the duſt, under the ſpirit of bondage, that is to ſay, as they take it, to them who are under grief unſpeakable, as they expound, *Iſa.* 61. 1, 2, 3. So in their opinion, Chriſt came to ſave only thoſe who in their own ſenſe are loſt, that is, who are on the brink of deſperation: wherefore, in reſpect they are not gone down deep enough as they think into this

gulf and hell of anguish and sorrow, they dare not approach or look toward Christ.

Mean time they lye daily mourning and weeping, and will not grant that their grief is worthy of the name of grief; which sorrow they cannot dissemble or hide, but do bewray it in their countenance, habite, walking and frequent sighing, and will professe, that they can hardly think they have right to eat or drink of Gods creatures, and were it not for fear of adding yet more sin to the former, they would not eat or drink at all: oftimes they chatter as swallows and sigh as the turtle dove, and oft-times their bowels sound out as if their parents or children or neareſt relations were dead, and yet for all this do not satisfie themselves in sorrow, but do complain that they are stupid and senslesse of their sinfull and miserable condition, wherein they do lye bound: and though they do confesse, that sometimes they mourn, yet they alledge their mourning is but like the early dew, or morning cloud, that goeth soon away. All the while it is in vain to offer to the afflicted consolation in Christ, because (saith he) I am not one of the mourners in *Sion* whom he will comfort: and in this their mistake, they do confirm themselves by another error, saying, that the measure of repentance and sorrow should answer unto the measure of sin; my sins, saith he, go far beyond the sins of others.

This and the like objections they cast in, whereby they do obstruct their own way unto Christ and keep themselves aback from him, till they be satisfied with their own prescribed measure of sorrow; which case indeed deserveth much compassion: for, who would not commiserat their case, who, being in a very miserable condition, dare not seek relief from their own misery which they do feel, and all because they are not yet more miserable? and when they are asked, cannot determine what measure of affected humiliation they would stand at as sufficient:

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2. In the cure of this case, as much must be yielded to the afflicted, as reasonably can be: and first, it must be confessed, that it is the duty of all who approach unto Christ, to come in the sense of sin, and acknowledgment of their miserable condition, and that the due deserving of their sin, is everlasting death.

It must be confessed also, that the measure of compunction, contrition and lamentation for sin, may possibly be exceeding great, as we see in the experience of *Heman* the Ezrait, *Psal.* 88. 11. *I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up; while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted.* And *David*, Ps. 38.

This also further must be yielded unto him, that the operation of the spirit of conviction by the law, doth ordinarily and of its own nature go before the spirit of adoption or the operation of the spirit of the Gospel, according to the covenant of grace, so that no man can in earnest embrace Christ as a Physician, as Mediator and Saviour of his soul, except he be sensible of his disease, acknowledge his natural enmity against God, and his own lost condition, being by nature under the curse of the Law.

Secondly, when these things are agreed upon, the afflicted person may be posed concerning the measure of the sorrow for sin, whether it must be the same in every convert, to wit, in that extremity and superlative degree, which he doth miss and desiderat in himself, and how long that sorrow in this eminent measure must continue? By this question he cannot choose but be at a stand, and unable to answer with Scripture-warrand; for, the Scripture doth indeed require serious repentance, but the measure of sorrow and sadness, it doth not prescribe: for, *Matth. chap.* 3. *v.* 2. 6. many upon the hearing of *John Baptist* preaching, were convicted of their sins, and did confesse their sins in the general, and forthwith were baptized by him. And, *Act.* 2. 37. 41. three thousand souls at the hearing of one sermon of *Peter*, were convinced of their sin, pricked

ed at the heart, repented, and fled to Christ for grace; were converted, baptized and entered members of the Christian Church, all in one day. Again, the afflicted may be posed with another question, seing he desiderats such a measure of sound hearty sorrow in himself before he can make his addresse unto Christ, out of what fountain mindeth he to draw this sorrow? of himself he hath it not, and from Christ by his grounds he cannot seek it: for he saith, for want of his imagined measure of sorrow for sin, he dare not approach unto Christ, because as he alledgeth none are called to come unto Christ. except such only as are in a superlative degree weary and loaden, and so full of the spirit of heavinesse, that he must be at the point of desperation near by. But the Scripture doth teach us, that Christ is that exalted Prince to give repentance unto *Israel*, in what measure of sorrow he pleaseth; and that therefore, such as are convinced of and in any measure sorrowfull for offending God, should run unto Christ, that he may give them a better measure of repentance.

Thirdly, the evils and danger which accompany and follow upon this practical error, may be represented unto the afflicted; for, first, by this his error he giveth way to Sathans tentation, who when he perceiveth the sense of sin begun in the afflicted by Gods mercy, and that the afflicted cannot now be hindered from repentance, nor be keeped in his former snare, doth change himself as if he were an angel of light, and setteth all at nought the measure of sorrow which the afflicted hath already, and shews unto him, how unanswerable the proportion of his sorrow is unto the multitude and hainousnesse of his sins, and so spurreth him on to mourn more and more, that if it be possible he may distemper and distract him, or make him pine away and perish in his sorrow, without faith or consolation in Christ: this is one evil.

Another

Another evil is this, the affectation of such a degree of sorrow, smelleth of seeking some sort of expiation of sin, and compensation of the pleasure taken in sin, by suitable sorrow for it: unto which practical error, we are by nature too too prone: for as by nature we strive to be justified by works according to the covenant of works, written in the children of *Adam*; so when we see our selves come short of the righteousnesse of works, we go about (as is to be seen in Papists) to supply the defect of works, by some one sort or other of our sufferings and satisfactions for sin, in special, that by sorrow and tears in abundance, we may wash away the guilt and pollution we have contracted by sin. And in this course we run on naturally, after wakening of the conscience, to exact pennance and punishment on our selves, till the deluded heart say, it is enough. And then, as if all were well, the deceived sinner resteth himself: which deceit of the heart, the oftener it hath place and prevaileth, without being observed, it is the more dangerous.

A third evil, following on this practical error, is, by it the free grace of God and merits of Christ, are greatly obscured, and both the mans consolation and sanctification are marred: the loss that the afflicted sustaineth on the one hand, and the drawing on of new guiltinesse by such a course on the other hand, is covered under the vizard of humiliation.

A fourth evil followeth this error, which is this, the afflicted person, so long as he continueth in this mistake, he giveth way to the tentation, and doth of set purpose foster his own misbelief, that he may thereby foster and augment his own sorrow, and affright himself with dreadfull imaginations what shall become of him, that he may augment his affected heavinesse of spirit, and make the fountain of his tears run the more abundantly.

A fifth evil is, the afflicted so long as he suspends his going to Christ, because he hath not mourned sufficiently for sin, he fosters another fault unawars, to wit,

a purpose to lay down any more sorrowing for sin, if once he had overtaken his imagined measure of sorrow, and had his accesse so made unto Christ. This deceit of the heart, is brought to light in the practice of some Antinomians, who allow themselves once to mourn for sin, that their mourning may make way for faith in Christ; but after they apprehend they have once repented, and casten their burthen on Christ, and do number themselves among believers, they scorn to mourn any more for sin, they harden themselves against all remorse of conscience, and do reject secret challenges as groundlesse, and make themselves merry with their own fancy, and reckon all penitents to be under the spirit of bondage: which evils, if the afflicted person would perceive to follow upon his error, which as a net is spred before his feet to keep him from going to Christ, and following the course and exercise of repentance all the dayes of his life, he would take heed better to his steps.

4. The afflicted must be informed, or called to mind concerning sorrow for sin, that it is not commended from the quantity or measure of it, but from the quality or sincerity of it. Now sincere sorrow for sin, is best discerned by the hatred which the mourner hath against sin, by the mourners humiliation of himself before God, by his abhorring himself both for his sin, and for the hardnesse of his heart under sin, by his purpose to strive against all sin, by his flying in unto Christ for relief from sin, by his entertaining and renewing of godly sorrow after he hath believed in Christ according as he findeth the inherent roots of sin to be springing up in him. This is indeed sincere and godly sorrow, which causeth repentance never to be repented of.

5. Fifthly and last of all, the afflicted must be exhorted not to linger any more but flye to Christ, and let him be humbled so much the more as he is not so humbled as he should and would be; let him call to minde,

minde, that Christ came not only to comfort mourners for sin, but also to call sinners *unto repentance*: for, Christ hath not put such a measure of sorrow, whereof we are speaking, to be the condition of the covenant of Grace, he doth not sell his precious wares, nor his gifts of grace, for the price of mens tears; but let him remember, that whosoever is so destitute in his own sense of all good, as he finds neither the sense of sin, nor repentance nor faith, nor any other good thing in himself, which may commend him to God, but by the contrair, much evil of all sorts, and yet cometh to Christ, is no doubt the poor in spirit, whom Christ hath pronounced blessed, *Matth.* 5. 3. and that the sense of his sin and misery, in the measure which he hath of it, is the evidence of eye-salve already bestowed upon him, to encourage him to buy of Christ all the riches which he holdeth forth to the poor in spirit, *Revel.* 3. 18.

CHAP. VII.

Wherein the Christians doubt, whether he be regenerat, because he findeth not his righteousness exceeding the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, is answered.

THere are some regenerat persons, who, in the sense of their sins and acknowledgment of their unworthinesse, and inability to help themselves, are fled unto Christ, and have given over themselves to him by faith, and are endeavouring to bring forth fruits suteable to repentance, who for all this, fall a doubting whether they be renewed, whether their faith be true and saving faith; and the reason which they give of their doubting, is, because the reformation of their life, whereunto they have attained, appeareth unto them not to exceed the righteousnesse which may be found in some Pagans, or in Scribes and Pharisees, of whom Christ hath said in the Evangel, *Matth.* 5. 20. *I say unto you, that except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

This doubt is followed with grief, anxiety of mind, and fear least all vertues in them be found nothing but counterfeit: and this case, except it be speedily cured, cannot chuse but draw after it heavy and hard consequences.

For curing whereof, we must confesse, that many Pagans and Infidels may be found in humane Histories, who from the principles of nature and civil education, have led a more innocent and blameless life, than many who glory in their Christian profession, for whose conviction and condemnation, Pagans and Infidels shall arise in the day of judgment, and be brought forth for a witnesse against many called Christians, and who shall be beaten with fewer stripes, than many who are counterfeit Christians, and do disgrace the profession of Christian Religion.

But we have here to do with these that are indeed regenerat, and indued with saving faith, who endeavour to be holy, and do lament their imperfections, and do not give over the use of the means, whereby they may profit in holinesse, albeit with grief and fear they go on heavily, suspecting they meet at last with disappointment, and be excluded from the kingdom of heaven, for their coming short of Scribes and Pharisees in the point of righteousnesse.

2. In this case, first, the complaint of the afflicted, concerning the imperfections of his life and fruits of faith, in as far as it is true and just, must be admitted, granted and confirmed, and the afflicted must be taught upon this consideration to be seriously humbled in the presence of God, that he may profit in self-denyal, and more and more renounce all confidence in his own works or inherent righteousnesse. To which purpose, let him consider yet more the body of death and original sin, not yet throughly mortified in him; let him look upon and acknowledge, in his present case, the bitter roots of infidelity, and inclination to depart away from the living God, even then when he is most called,

and

and hath moſt need to draw near and adhere unto him: upon the ſight and conſideration whereof, he ſhall perceive a neceſſity daily to renew the acts of repentance and faith in Chriſt.

Secondly, let the neceſſity and timeous uſe-making of the imputed righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, be ſhewed unto him: which righteouſneſſe, if the Lord had not ſet before us for a refuge, what ſhould become of us in the examination of our works, and felt imperfection of our inherent righteouſneſſe? And here the afflicted muſt be exhorted, in the ſenſe of his own un-righteouſneſſe, to run alwayes toward Chriſt, to have his nakedneſſe hid by the garment of Chriſts imputed righteouſneſſe, and exhorted to apply and imbrace more and more ſtraitly the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt our Cautioner, who is judicially by the Father adjudged to the believer fled unto him, for righteouſneſſe, *1 Cor. 1. 30. But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who is made unto us wiſdom and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.* And here let the friend, comforter of the afflicted, inſiſt, that he may conſider the value of the ranſom paid for us, and of the righteouſneſſe purchaſed unto us, for the only garment able to hide our nakedneſſe.

Thirdly, let the afflicted perſon underſtand, that it is righteouſneſſe with God to be diſpleaſed with his children, when they eſteem little and make little uſe of the dear bought righteouſneſſe which Chriſt hath purchaſed, and that in wiſdom and righteouſneſſe, Chriſt doth not increaſe the inherent righteouſneſſe of thoſe who ſlight him in the mater of his imputed righteouſneſſe; for, we are not juſtified by the perfection of inherent righteouſneſſe, which in this life is impoſſible, but by the perfection of Chriſts righteouſneſſe imputed unto the believer in him.

Fourthly, when the Paſtor or prudent friend perceiveth the afflicted now convicted of his miſtake and error, and to be brought to acknowledge, that the juſtification of a ſinner doth come by the imputation of the righ-

righteousnesse of Christ alone, without respect to the works of the law; and that the justified man must set himself to bring forth good fruits in the gracious furniture which Christ hath promised to the believer. Now, I say, let him enter upon the comparison of the righteousnesse of the penitent believer in Christ, with the righteousnesse of the Scribes and Pharisees, and then shall it be clear to the afflicted person, that the righteousnesse of the weak Christian shall far exceed the righteousnesse, not only of Pagans, but also of Scribes and Pharisees of the highest pitch, and that for three reasons; the first is this, the Pharisee cutteth short the interpretation of the law, unto the measure of his own external obedience, lest the law whereby he seeketh justification should condemn him; but the Christian acknowledgeth in all things the spirituality and perfection of the Law, and doth not reject any duty which the Law doth command, but finds himself bound to obey the Law in all things, and to aim to be perfect as his heavenly Father is perfect. The second reason is, because the works which the Pharisee or Scribe doth, are all counterfeit and corrupt, in regard they arise from the strength of the natural man, and are done for his own glory and carnal ends, and not for the glory of God; but the works of the Christian, exercising faith in Christ, proceed from the power of the spirit of Christ in him, and are done to the glory of God by him. The third reason is, because the righteousnesse of works which the Scribes and Pharisees did affect at, is altogether impossible, and maketh void the grace of God: for, if righteousnesse be by works, it is no more of grace, it overturnes that heavenly way of justification by faith in Christ: for, the righteousnesse of the Pharisee by works, cannot consist with the righteousnesse which is by faith of grace; but the righteousnesse and justification of the Christian by faith in Christ, is possible and ready at hand, to every one who renounceth all confidence in his own worthinesse, and flyeth unto Christ for grace;

grace: and this is a moſt perfect way of righteouſneſſe, which dependeth upon the obedience and ſatisfaction of Chriſt imputed to the believer in him. Which righteouſneſſe only can ſtand in the judgment of God as perfect, which only doth open the fountain whereby the power of the holy Ghoſt runneth down upon the man juſtified by faith in Chriſt, to enable him to bring forth the acceptable fruits of new obedience.

By this compariſon, it doth eaſily appear, that the righteouſneſſe of the weak believer in Chriſt, doth far exceed the righteouſneſſe of the Scribes and Phariſees: and thus may the afflicted be ſolved of his doubt, ariſing from compariſon of his righteouſneſſe with the righteouſneſſe of the Phariſees.

3. If theſe grounds of ſatisfaction, laid before the afflicted, do not ſatisfie, but his wounds do break up and bleed afreſh, let us examine his reaſons. O! ſaith he, what I have been aiming at in the way of new obedience, I ſuſpect is not accepted of God, becauſe I find not theſe fruits of the Spirit, which the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of as evidences of a new creature, *Gal.* 5. 22. love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſſe, goodneſſe, faith, meekneſſe and temperance; the defect and little feeling of theſe fruits, doth argue, that God doth not approve my works.

For anſwering of this doubt, let us remember, that it is pre-ſuppoſed and found by experience, that ſome that are afflicted with this doubt and ſuſpicion, do not ceaſe to follow duties howbeit heartleſſly, do live blameleſſe in an evil world, and ſo are not idle nor unfruitfull: only this doth trouble them, that they find not the peace of conſcience which they did expect, they miſſe joy in God, conſolation in their prayers, patience in affections, chearfulneſs and alacrity in following their calling; they do not find ſenſible approbation of their work from God, as they did promiſe to themſelves and did expect. Hence flow their tears, lamentations and complaints of themſelves, and ſuſpicions of the reality

lity and sincerity of their faith, and all without just cause: for, as in bodily sicknesses, sometime moe maladies then one are complicat, and to each of them respect must be had for perfecting the cure; So in this case, moe practical errors do concur, and each of them must be deciphered and removed. We shall condescend upon four; The first practicall error of the afflicted, is the suspending of his faith upon a tacite condition, that such and such effects be produced, and that Gods sensible approbation of his diligence and works be felt, as if there were no warrantable act of faith for laying hold on Christ, except after a certain time and tryal taken whether it shall produce such or such fruits or not. And here three deceits do concur; The first is, a faith with a secret reservation, *if such fruits follow*, is by suggestion of the tempter, thrust in, in the place of absolute believing without reservation, and in effect, is a trying of God, in stead of trusting in him; for through temptation, the afflicted tacitly craveth a condition to be performed by God, that when God performeth the prescribed condition, then the mans faith after that may rest upon him, other wayes not: for when a sinner cometh to Christ, he should speak to this sense. "O Lord, "my God, seing it hath pleased thee to reveal thy self "to me, a blind impotent sinner, running toward hell, "and hast offered thy self to me for a Saviour, in whom "I may have wisdom, righteousnesse, sanctification and "redemption. Behold, O Lord, I heartily receive the "grace offered, I imbrace thy Word, and thy Self offer-"ed to me in thy Word, and do give up my self wholly "to thy government, that thou may repair in me the "lost Image of God, and powerfully carry me on un-"to salvation. In stead of saying thus and closing absolutely the bargain with God in Christ reconciling the world to himself, the tempter would have the poor afflicted man to speak, as it were, to this sense. "O "Lord, the condition whereupon thou dost offer to be "my God and Saviour, doth please me well, but be-

"cause

"cauſe I fear I may deceive my ſelf in performing that "condition, I require another condition of thee, that "thou wouldſt, firſt, let me ſee the fruits of faith in me, "which if I ſhall find within ſometime hence, then will "I count my ſelf a believer, and will reſt on thee: but "if I find not ſuch fruits as may evidence true faith in "me, I muſt pronounce my faith, either no faith or a "dead faith, which hath a name of faith, but neither "power nor life in it. For, faith without works is dead, as *James* ſaith, *ch.* 2. 26.

Now, what is this elſe in effect, then to make a new condition in the covenant of Grace, and to promiſe upon this condition, to believe on Chriſt, if God ſhall do as the ſinner giveth him direction? that is, if God ſhall make him bring forth the fruits of faith firſt, when it became him abſolutely to imbrace Chriſt, that he might both be forgiven of ſin, and enabled to bring forth fruits of faith?

Another fault is here alſo, which is this, the afflicted perſon doth require mature fruits from a weak faith, from a faith that is not ſetled and fixed, but ſuſpended on a condition, which is no leſſe unreaſonable, then if a fooliſh Gardner ſhould require fruits of a young tree lately planted, yea before the roots of it were well ſetled in the ground; yea, and would not let it ſtand in his garden, except it ſhould firſt bring forth fruits, whereby it might evidence it ſelf worthy of pains taking on it.

A third fault is this, that the afflicted, in this caſe, doth preſuppoſe, that true faith is poſterior to the fruits of true faith, both in nature and time: for, if he will not believe in Chriſt, till after he perceive and feel in himſelf the fruits of faith, upon this ground he can never believe till he firſt find the fruits of faith in himſelf, which is nothing elſe in effect, then to imagine, that the effect muſt go before its cauſe.

Unto this threefold ſelf-deceit, we offer this one remedy in general, that the afflicted perſon in the foreſaid

ſaid caſe, humble himſelf before God in the ſenſe of his barrenneſſe, and ſo much the more as he findeth ſmall or no fruits in himſelf, let him flye to Chriſt and faſten himſelf the more on his imputed righteouſneſſe, and cleave unto him by faith, without delay, that he may draw vertue and furniture from him to bring forth good fruits; for, this is the only way to make him bring forth fruits in abundance, as Chriſt doth teach us, *Joh.* 15. 5. *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit: for without me, ye can do nothing.* He, and he only, can make a good tree of an evil imp, and cauſe it bring forth fruits anſwerable to the nature of the true vine wherein it is ingrafted. And ſeing Chriſt in the Canticle, *ch.* 2. 13. doth make no ſmall account of the green figs and tender grapes, let not the afflicted deſpiſe the day of ſmall things.

4. The ſecond practical error in the afflicteds foreſaid caſe, is this, the afflicted perſon hath imagined in himſelf, that ſuch and ſuch fruits would preſently follow upon his receiving the offer of Chriſt, as that he ſhould forthwith be skilfull in the knowledge of the myſteries of ſalvation, able to pray eloquently, made chearfull in ſinging ſongs of praiſe unto God, ready and expedit to every good work, and that he ſhould feel conſtantly an un-interrupted peace in his conſcience, and joy in the holy Ghoſt; but after that by experience he hath found, that he cannot ſo much as enter upon any good work without a fight with Sathan and with his own corrupt nature, and other impediments, and withall he doth feel the peace of his conſcience and the joy of the holy Ghoſt with-drawn, hereupon he begins to ſuſpect the whole work of Gods grace in himſelf, and that he remaineth in the ſtate of nature unrenewed.

5. For removing of this error, let the afflicted know, that the hopes which he hath conceived at the hearing of the Goſpel, ſhall not be diſappointed (albeit according to his childiſh fore-conception they come not to paſſe) for in a time due and acceptable, God ſhall perform

form all his promiſes and bring the believer (fled unto him) on upon his way, till he put him in full poſſeſſion of fredom from all ſin and miſery. But yet this felicity is brought about, not all at once, but peece and peece, and not without conflict with the enemies of our ſalvation, and not without uſe of the meanes appointed of God. Wherefore let the afflicted be exhorted to take courage unto him, as becometh a ſouldier of Chriſt, and let him go on in the wayes of the Lord in hope and patience, being aſſured that whatſoever God hath promiſed, he will ſurely perform, in that maner, meaſure, order and time, and by his own appointed means as he hath ſet down in his holy Scriptures.

6. The third practical error of the afflicted in the foreſaid caſe, is, that he doth not judge rightly of his own faith, nor of the fruits thereof: for of his own faith he judgeth no otherwayes than of the faith of another man, whileas there is a diverſe way to judge of my own faith then of another mans faith; for becauſe I cannot reach to the internal acts of the ſoul of another man, therefore I muſt judge only by the outward effects, according to the rule that *James* giveth, *chap. 2. ver. 10. Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will ſhew thee my faith by my works.* Yet of my own faith I may judge, not only by the external effects of it (which in the firſt cloſing with Chriſt, are not yet obſervable poſſibly) but alſo by the internal act of faith which the holy Spirit who knows the heart doth reveal unto me, by making me not only heartily to embrace Chriſt offered in the Goſpel, and love him, but alſo can make me reflect and turn back mine eye upon his own gift and grace in me, according to that of the Apoſtle, *1 Cor. 2. 12. We have received the Spirit of God, that we might know the things freely given to us of God.*

Again the afflicted doth not judge rightly of his own fruits of faith, according as the truth is, and as the Lord in his Word doth judge; he ſhould diſtinguiſh between

between the sincerity of the work and the perfection of it (a work may be done uprightly, and yet be imperfect) he should distinguish what is Gods part in the work, from that which is wrong and corrupt, flowing from the remainder of sin in him. These things he doth confound, and doth so fix his eyes upon the defects and imperfection of his work, that he seeth nothing but what is wrong, when it is his duty both to observe what is wrong, that he may be humbled, and cast away all confidence in his work, and to observe also what is good and right in his work, proceeding from the grace of God in him, and so praise and thank God for it in Christ, *who will not quench the smoaking flax*, Isa. 42. 3.

7. For remedy therefore of this error, let the afflicted, first, look upon the acts of his faith both internal and external, both on the elicit acts of faith and the imperat acts (as they are called in the Schools) and let him judge of both according to what is right and equitable, that whatsoever be the measure of new obedience, it may be differenced from the mixture of infirmity, defects, or corruption. And let him not judge of his work according to the suggestions and calumnies of Sathan, who alwayes condemneth so far as he can, what is good in Gods children; or if he cannot condemn it, doth labour to have it abused.

Secondly, let the afflicted observe the due order both in doing his duties and in judging thereof: for of necessity he must, first, put forth an act of faith and love on Christ, before he can passe judgment on it, and let him first do the work commanded to the believer, and then passe sentence, that he may be strengthened to do moe duties, and so to present them to God to be washed, accepted and amended in his following service.

Thirdly, let him carefully look unto the end which he should propose to himself in judging of his acts of faith and obedience: for the end of judging our selves and our works, should be to confirm our faith in Christ,

Christ, when we find any thing done according to the rule, and to flye to Christ for pardon and grace if we conceive all is wrong after we have examined maters.

6. The fourth practical error, is, that the afflicted first suffereth his faith to be wounded and weakened by Sathans tentation, and then to be drawn forth to the field to give a proof of the strength of his faith in some difficile duty, before the wound of faith be bound up or healed; for, it is a great disadvantage to enter the lists with Sathan about the fruits of faith, whether they be sincere or not, when faith is wounded, yea, fainteth, and is brought in question whether it be true faith or not. Now this is a special stratageme and wile of Sathan, by whatsoever mean he can to hurt the faith of Gods children, that he may by that marr communion-keeping with God, and cut off, if he can, the conduit whereby the power of Christ is conveyed to the believer for making him give acceptable obedience unto God. And certainly, it is no lesse difficile, when faith is wrested, and for a time out of joynt, to set about acceptable service, then it is to make a man to set upon his work when his armes are out of joynt.

Therefore, for remedy of this error, let the afflicted, so soon as he findeth his faith wounded, incontinent set himself down before God humbly, and acknowledge his foolishnesse, want of watching, unworthinesse and inability, either to know how he hath grieved Gods Spirit, and made open a door for the Tempter to fall in upon him, or to repent the sins which he knoweth might have provoked God so to exercise him; and next, let him look unto God in Christ reconcileing the world to himself, and lay hold on the hornes of the altar, on the throne of grace for strengthening his faith, that he may find help for the present need, and thereafter also to walk more wisely: for, this is the counsell which Christ doth give to the corrupt Church of *Sardis*, Revel. 3. 2. *Strengthen the thing*

which remaineth and is ready to die. Thus may the afflicted recover ſtrength of faith and ability to reſiſt Sathan, and furniture for bringing forth unqueſtionable fruits of faith.

CHAP. VIII.

Wherein the regenerat mans doubt, whether he be in the ſtate of grace, ariſing from his unquietneſſe of ſpirit, is anſwered.

THis caſe is incident to many dear children of God, and may befall Champions in time of ſad affliction, as we ſee in the Prophet, *Pſ.* 42. 11. and 43. 5. *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted within me?* But even in time of outward proſperity, or when no great affliction bodily lyeth on, many, who in the ſenſe of their ſinfulneſſe have fled to Jeſus Chriſt, and have taken his yoke upon them, are troubled with doubtings, whether they be of the number of true believers, whether they have rightly come unto Chriſt, whether they have been well accepted of him; and for their doubting they can give no other reaſon, ſave this, I cannot be quiet, nor reſt in aſſurance, that I am in the ſtate of grace; if they be interrogat, what they think of the evident ſigns of their regeneration which have been and are to be ſeen in their converſation ſince they began in earneſt to ſeek the face of God in Chriſt? They will poſſibly not altogether deny Gods work in them; but yet dare not lean weight upon theſe ſigns, becauſe they do find theſe ſigns alſo brought in queſtion, whether they have been or are kindly and ſincere; mean time they are about to do that which is acceptable to God in the courſe of their calling, albeit with more heavineſſe and leſſe alacrity then becometh perſons reconciled to God in Chriſt.

2. This diſeaſe will be found complicat and made up of moe miſtakes and errors then one: and therefore is to be the more narrowly conſidered, becauſe it is no ſmall

ſmall hinderance of a comfortable chriſtian converſation, which God doth allow on his children; for in the party troubled with unquietneſſe, we preſuppone, 1. there is a ſerious ſenſe of ſin, and purpoſe to do better. 2. An unfained embracing of the covenant of grace and reconciliation in Chriſt Jeſus. And, 3. an honeſt, though weak, endeavour to bring forth the fruits of new obedience: and yet notwithſtanding the perſon is not quiet, but walketh heavily and is diſcouraged, by reaſon of his uncertainty, whether he be in the ſtate of grace or not: yea, he is caſt down and diſquieted, becauſe he is diſquieted, and cannot get a reaſonable anſwer from his conſcience when he asketh of it, why are thou caſt down and diſquieted within me?

3. The miſtakes and errors, whence this diſſatisfaction and unquietneſſe doth flow are many; but we ſhall condeſcend upon eight or nine only. The firſt error, and cauſe of unquietneſſe is, or may be this, that the party afflicted, albeit he have the habits of ſaving grace in him, and doth by Gods grace put forth theſe habits in actual exercise, yet he doth not reflect upon, nor turn his eye to obſerve, the operations of Gods holy Spirit in himſelf, nor the acts of ſaving grace, which the holy Spirit hath made him put forth, of which if he take not notice, they are to him for the time as if they were not; and ſo no wonder he be diſquiet, while he perceiveth not in himſelf that which might make him quiet: For example, when the ſenſe of ſin is raiſed up in a mans ſpirit by the holy Ghoſt, if he do not obſerve that this is one of the operations of the holy Spirit convincing the world of ſin, or if he do not turn back his eye on this operation, and upon his own act, ſtirred up thereby, to ſubſcribe the ſentence of the law againſt himſelf, no wonder that he doubt of his converſion, till he ſee the foot-ſteps of God the converter of him, from the love and approbation of ſin, unto the hatred of it; and when he is fled to Chriſt the only Redeemer from ſin and miſery, and hath laid hold

on him according to the covenant of grace offered in him, if he do not look back on this operation of God drawing him to Christ, and upon his own act of coming unto Christ, by the draught of Gods Spirit, what wonder he do not reckon himself among believers, albeit he be in Gods account one of that number? And when the holy Spirit hath kindled in him not only a purpose of new obedience, but also a begun endeavour to live holily, justly and soberly, if he do not observe and acknowledge these operations of Gods Spirit making him to bring forth these acts, what wonder that this mistake and inconsideration do open a door to disquietnesse and doubting, whether he be in the state of grace or not?

4. For removing this cause of disquietnesse, the afflicted person must beware that he passe not sentence of Gods dispensation towards him, according to the tentations and suggestions of Sathan, nor yet according to the opinion which his Pastor or friend may have of him, judging somewhat uncharitably of him, upon sinister suspicions: neither let him stand to the suspicions of his own incredulous heart; but let him consider what the Word of the Lord hath said of the person in whom these three graces do concur, to wit, 1. the sense of sin and inability to help our selves; 2. flying unto Christ for relief from sin and misery; and, 3. some measure of upright purpose and endeavour to serve God in new obedience; for of such saith the Apostle, *Phil.* 3. 3. *We are the Circumcision or true Israelits, who have no confidence in the flesh, but rejoyce in Jesus Christ, and worship God in the spirit.* Let him therefore esteem the discovery of his sinfull and wretched estate in himself to be the very fruit of the eye-salve and work of the Spirit bestowed on him by Christ, and let him esteem his hearty consent given to the covenant of grace and reconciliation, to be the undoubted act of saving faith. For, hearty consent to the offer of grace in Jesus Christ, presuppones, first, that the person sees no standing for him by the law or covenant of works, but is beaten from all

all confidence in himself, and made to believe and subscribe the righteous sentence of the law against himself to the praise of Gods truth and justice. Secondly, it imports the mans believing the testimony which God hath given of Christ Jesus, to wit, that God hath made a gift of life eternall to the soul that hungereth and thirsteth for righteousnesse, and that this life is in his Son; yea it imports the mans receiving and embracing of Christ offered in the Gospel. Thirdly, it importeth, that the consenter to the covenant of grace as he hath renounced confidence in his own works, So he hath given up himself to God, to live by the grace of Jesus Christ unto eternall life. Now if the afflicted shall reflect upon these two operations of the holy Ghost, making him humble in the sense of sin, heartily to receive Christ Jesus for his relief, and withall do observe an unfained purpose and begun endeavour to live more holily and fruitfully by the grace and furniture of Christ, howsoever he labour under many infirmities, not only is he undoubtedly a new creature, but also by observing the foresaid evidence thereof, may conclude, that God hath begun a good work of grace in him, and so shall this first cause of disquietnesse be removed.

5. Another cause of disquietnesse is, or may be this, if the afflicted, after examination of the work of grace in himself, being convinced of his blessed estate and confirmed by present sense of Gods love shed abroad in his heart, do not hold fast his estimation of Gods work in himself longer then the sensible comfort thereof remaineth with him, but either doth retreat his judgment of his blessed estate, or doth not defend his right, doth not resist Sathan by being stedfast in the faith, no wonder his disquietnesse and dejection of courage return upon him.

6. For removing of this cause of disquietnesse, let the afflicted consider, that spiritual consolation, and sensible feeling of Gods favour, is granted to Gods children to make them stedfast in the faith of

Gods grace toward them, when ſenſible comfort is with-drawn, and when they are put to the tryal and exerciſe of their faith, under trouble and temptations. And therefore, when the afflicted, once being made clear of his intereſt in Chriſt, and of his keeping on him the yoke of Chriſt, doth find a change in his condition, let him preſently humble himſelf before God, in acknowledgment of the power of the body of ſin in himſelf, and of whatſoever evil fruit it hath brought forth, whereby he hath procured the change of his own comfortable condition; and let him renew the acts of his repentance and of his faith in Chriſt, ſtriving againſt all temptations for the faith once given to him, and diſputing for his right and intereſt unto Gods grace in Chriſt, that he may with patience obtain the victory over his temptation, and be able, not only with *David* to charge his own ſoul to truſt in God, *the help and health of his countenance*, Pſ. 42. and 43. but alſo to glory with the Apoſtle, and to ſay, 2 *Tim.* 1. 22. *I know whom I have believed, and I am perſwaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that day.* And ſo may the ſecond cauſe of diſquietneſſe be removed.

7. A third cauſe of diſquietneſſe is, or may be, this, if a ſincere convert, finding himſelf come ſhort both of his purpoſe and hope of making progreſſe in the courſe of new obedience, and reformation of heart and converſation, ſhall, in ſtead of being more humbled and beaten more out of confidence in his own ſtrength and works, and in ſtead of laying faſter hold on the imputed righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, yield unto diſcouragement, and ſo open a door for calling his own converſion in queſtion. In this caſe, the diſquietneſſe of the true convert is augmented, by reaſon of the conſcience of his ſincerity in his converſion, wherein he renounced the love and ſervice of all ſin, renounced all confidence in his own worth or works, did flye unto the grace offered in Chriſt, and received him heartily, and purpoſed

posed honestly to serve God thereafter in newness of life, which maketh him say in himself, I can never put repentance from dead works, and faith in Christ, and purpose of new obedience more sincerely in exercise, then I have done; and now, seing I come short of my purpose and hope of profiting, and can never more sincerely repent of sin or believe in Christ then I have done, have I not just cause of doubting of my estate and of discouragment and disquietnesse.

8. For removing this cause of disquietnesse, let the afflicted consider first, that there is a great difference between purpose and practice. A holy and sincere purpose oft times cometh short in practice; for, the Apostle saith, *Rom.* 7. 18. *To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not.* The inlake here is of strength to perform, and not in the sincerity of the will and purpose.

Secondly, let him consider, that there is a difference between the consent of a well-informed conscience to the discharge of holy duties, and the practical coming up of the not well-reformed heart, unto the actual discharge of those duties; for oft-times the heart is like a deceitfull bow, that disappointeth the archer; therefore, let not the afflicted deny the sincerity of his purpose, but let him be humbled for the corruption of his heart, which hath not answered his purpose and expectation.

Thirdly, let not the afflicted think, that he hath so fully renounced all confidence in his own works as he conceived: we may be clearly convinced not to lean to our own righteousnesse, and so more easily in our judgment renounce all confidence in our good behaviour; but the dregs of the sin of misbelieving Jews is not easily purged out of us, wherein they went about to establish their own righteousnesse, and did not submit themselves to the righteousnesse of faith, *Rom.* 9. and, 10. 3. As he therefore, who denyeth, that he leaneth his weight on his staff and yet falleth to the

ground when his staff doth slide, is found to have leaned more weight on his staff then he pretended; So he is found to have leaned too much weight upon his own works, who is cast down, because his performances are not answerable to his purpose and hopes. Humbled indeed he ought to be, and to lament his misery under the body of death, but not be so dejected and discouraged, as to loose or slacken his grips of the covenant of Grace; especially when he doth consider, that the Lord, by this experience of his own weakness, is teaching him thereafter to have a more high estimation, and make better use, of Christs imputed righteousness, and to lean less to his own purposes, and promises, and inherent righteousness, that so he may draw more ability from Christ by faith, to bring forth better fruits: *for without me*, saith Christ, *you can do nothing*, Joh. 15. 5.

Last of all, let him neither say nor think, that he cannot put forth any act of repentance or faith, or purpose of amendment of life, more sincerely then he hath done; for, no man hath attained such a measure of sincerity in the discharge of any act of saving grace, but there is room for him to receive a greater measure both of activity and sincerity in acting, then he hath attained already: but rather let him examine more narrowly, and find out the corrupt inclination of the heart to lean to its own inherent righteousness, and difficulty of subjecting it self wholly to the righteousness of faith, and sanctification through faith in Christ; for, this doth the Apostle teach us to do, *Philip.* 3. 12, 13, 14. he did not think himself already perfect, but reached himself forth to those things which were before him, pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. And the end of the pressing of the Law is, that sin may be the more clearly discovered; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through Christ Jesus our Lord, *Rom.* 5. 20, 21.

9. The

9. The fourth cause of disquietnesse is, or may be, this, if the true convert, being frequently convinced of the manifold deceits of the heart, for this cause shall begin to call in question all the work of grace in himself: which inconvenience doth flow from his not putting difference between the true consent of the heart unto the covenant of Grace and acts of holinesse, in so far as the heart is renewed on the one hand, and the doubting or hesitation of the heart, in as far as it is not purged from the relicts of incredulity and backwardnesse unto godlinesse on the other hand; or, because he puts no difference between the effects of renewing grace, and the effects of in-dwelling sin in himself, both of them putting forth their power in the self same actions: for, if this difference shall not be observed, and sentence so given, as that which is in the renewed man be absolved and commended, and that which flowes from indwelling sin be disallowed and condemned, without prejudice to any good, which shall be found in the renewed man, it is impossible that the conscience can be quiet, or that any good action of the Saints can be approven, by reason of sin in us; for, the evil which we would not, shall be found in us, as is clear in the Apostles censure of himself, *Rom.* 7. 15. to 20.

10. For removing this fourth cause of disquietnesse, let the afflicted learn so to observe the inlakes and sinfull imperfections and pollutions of his best works, as he observe also that which is good in his actions, that of the good he may make thankfull confession unto God, and pray for the increase thereof; and of the inlakes and pollutions of his works, he may make confession also, and be humbled for them, and flye to the unspotted righteousnes of Christ, and to the fountain opened up in his house for sin and uncleannesse, *Zech.* 13. 1. This wisdom is taught us in the example of the father of the child possessed with a dumb and deaf spirit, crying out and saying with tears, *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief*, Mark, 9. 24. he maintains the begun work of faith

faith in himself, and confesseth the evil he found in himself, and flyeth by prayer to Christ to help him.

11. The fifth cause of disquietnesse is, or may be this, if the true convert suspend the absolution of his own faith and fruits thereof from being hypocritical and counterfeit, untill he find himself freed from disquietnesse, and do injoy peace and tranquillity of mind, which he doth apprehend should alwayes accompany sound, sincere and unfained faith, and on this ground he esteemeth *that faith* only to be *true faith*, which hath overcome all doubtings, and now being victorious, bringeth peace and quietnesse with it; and *that faith* which is tossed, or troubled with doubtings, he thinketh may justly be suspected of unsoundnesse, as if tentation to doubting, were a sufficient reason to make a question of the sincerity of believing: or as if it were a sufficient reason for a man to call his faith in question, whether it be true faith or not, because Sathan calleth it in question: for if this were a sufficient reason to question a work or act of grace in a man, no work of grace, nor no point of true religion, should be holden for sound and true, because Sathan never ceaseth to calumniat and quarrel the truth, both of Gods Word and working, for he was so malicious and impudent as to question Christ, *If thou be the Son of God*, Mat. 4. 3.

12. For removing of this cause of disquietnesse, let the afflicted consider, first, that the assaults of the enemy do neither diminish the worth, nor the estimation of faith; for, faith fighting, is no lesse solid and sound in the time of battel, then it is after victory, standing victorious. 2. Let him consider that we are called to a warfare, not only against flesh and blood, but also against principalities and powers and spiritual wickednesses, *Ephes.* 6. and that we may not promise to our selves, freedom or exemption from Sathans throwing fiery darts at us, so long as we live, as the Apostle doth warn us, *Ephes.* 5. Let him consider thirdly, that objections and questions, moved against the converts

verts faith, are rather a token of the sincerity thereof, then a reason for bringing it in question: for, the Pirat Sathan can discern well enough between an empty vessel and a ship loadened with precious wares, and useth to set upon the rich ship, that he may spoil it, if he can, of that most precious faith, and not trouble himself to molest a secure presumptuous person, lest he should waken him, by such means, out of his dream, and chase him unto God. But as for a man that is already fled from him and turned to God by faith in Christ, he will not fail to follow the chase, that if he cannot bring him back, yet he may vex him and dog him at the heels till his entry in heaven. Fourthly, let him consider, that the Lord useth to suffer Sathan to trouble the believer with suggestions to waken his faith, of set purpose to teach the believer to fight his battels, and by frequent exercises to be purified more and more, like gold or silver put oft-times in the furnace, yea, and that the wrestler may be made valiant in fight, *Heb.* 11. 34. whereupon the afflicted must be exhorted not only to take courage and to despise the malice of the adversary, but also to rejoyce when he doth meet with manifold tentations (as we are charged, *Jam.* 1. 2.) because of the fruit following by Gods blessing on such exercise. And to this end, let him put on the whole armour of God, that when he hath resisted and overcome one tentation, he may stand and resist another, *Ephes.* 6.

13. The sixth cause of disquietnesse, is, or may be this, if the true convert do not distinguish, but confound, the peace he hath with God, and the peace he hath in his conscience; if he do not distinguish but confound peace with God and rest from assaults of the adversary; if he do not distinguish, but confound, peace of mind, and peace of conscience; if he do not distinguish and put a due difference between these sorts of peace, he cannot choose but be disquieted, by suspecting his peace with God, because he hath not rest

nor

nor peace from Sathans assaults; he cannot eshew disquietnesse, when he conceives that his peace with God is dissolved, when trouble ariseth in his own conscience. And no wonder he be disquieted when he apprehendeth every perturbation of his mind to be a breach of peace with God, or with his own conscience.

14. For removing of this cause of disquietnesse, the afflicted must consider, first, that peace with God, doth follow immediatly upon an humbled sinners flying to Christ, and embracing the offer of reconciliation with God in Christ, when, in the mean time, the conscience possibly may be going on pursuing the convert with challenges for all sort of sin and guiltinesse; for he that is fled to Christ by faith, is justified, and being justified by faith, he hath peace with God, granted, decreed, pronounced in his favours, and registrat in the Court-book of the Evangel, albeit possibly the absolved convert, hath not drawn forth the extract of the decreet, nor considered it, when he hath read it, nor applied the same to himself according as the general sentence giveth him warrand.

Therefore, the humbled sinner, fled unto Christ, and engaged heartily to his service, must not take heed so much to what his sickly, and not clearly informed conscience doth say, as to what God, who is greater then the conscience, and giveth order and rule to the conscience, doth say to such a poor soul fled unto Christ.

Secondly, let him consider, that his peace is not marred with God, by Sathans warring against him; for, peace with God, standeth well with warr against all spiritual enemies: and therefore the lesse rest he hath from Sathans trouble and molestation, let him be the more confident of his peace with God, whose battels he is fighting against Sathan.

Thirdly, let him consider, that perturbation of mind, doth neither hinder peace with God, nor peace

of

of conſcience: for the mind and thoughts of a man, for many reaſons may be troubled and diſquieted, when peace with God and peace of conſcience are ſetled and eſtabliſhed: for, when the mind is troubled, and tempted to anxiety, the Apoſtle ſheweth how to remove the perturbation of the mind, and ſetle the peace of conſcience alſo, *Phil.* 4. 6, 7. *Be carefull*, ſaith he, or anxious, *for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and ſupplication with thanksgiving, let your requeſts be made manifeſt to God, and the peace of God which paſſes all underſtanding ſhall keep your hearts and minds through Chriſt Jeſus.* And in his own experience he lets us ſee the difference of perturbation of mind, from peace with God and the conſcience alſo, 2 *Cor.* 7. 5, 6. *When we were come into* Macedonia, *our fleſh had no reſt, but we were troubled on every ſide, without were fightings, within were fears; nevertheleſſe, God that comforteth theſe that are caſt down, comforted us in the coming of* Titus: So alſo, 2 *Cor.* 2. 12, 13, 14.

15. The ſeventh cauſe of diſquietneſſe, is, or may be this, if the true convert be either ignorant or forgetfull of the way of obtaining, maintaining, repairing and recovering the true peace of God in himſelf, and of the change of Gods diſpenſation toward his children which is common; through many tribulations God doth bring his own to heaven. Sometime he ſhews them his countenance in a comfortable providence, ſometime he hides his face, but doth not change his love toward them, *Pſal.* 30. 7. *Thou hideſt thy face*, ſaith *David, and I was troubled*, but here was his wiſdom, he went the ſtraight way to recover his peace, *I cryed to thee, O Lord, and unto the Lord made I my ſupplication*, and his mourning was turned into dauncing, *Pſal.* 30. 7, 8. to the end. But many weak converts are not ſo wiſe, who by their inconſiderat courſes do caſt themſelves in fears, jealouſies and ſuſpicions, both of Gods love to them and of their own intereſt in him: when they miſſe felt conſolations they fall to quarrel their

right.

right. And if they resolve to have their condition helped, they prescribe their own time, way and measure, and nothing can satisfie them till they recover possession of lost sense, with the Spouse, *Cant.* 2. 5. *Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples* (saith she) *for I am sick of love.* It is true, sometime God doth condescend to their passionat pursuit of comfort, but their not believing, in the mean time, and their hasting to have their condition altered, before patience hath wrought the perfect work, is not to be commended or approven.

16. For removing this cause of disquietnesse, let the afflicted consider, first, that the Lord neither sheweth his loving countenance to the weak disciple, nor hideth it from him, but out of love; he neither correcteth nor comforteth him, but out of love; *I am the Lord and change not*, saith he *Mal.* 3. 6. *Therefore you sons of* Jacob *are not consumed.* If he give consolation sensibly, it is to confirm their weak faith, by sensible experience of the fruit of believing in him, and if he withdraw his consolation, it is that he may exercise their faith, and train them to believe his Word without a sensible pawn for it: And therefore, for removing this cause of disquietnesse, by all means let the afflicted beware to mis-construct the Lords dealing, but let him strive against all suggestions of Sathan, or his own misbelieving heart, and entertain friendly thoughts of God; for a true friend, or father among men, will take it for no small injury to be suspected of his friendly or fatherly affection to his friend or child; yea, even Physicians and Chyrurgians, find a good exposition from their Patients, when they give them bitter potions, when they cut and carve and burn their flesh, still they are exponed to aim at the Patients good, much more should every man, whatsoever dispensation of God he meet with, give a good construction of his working.

Secondly, let him consider, that the Lord hath his own way and order of working; first, he discovereth sin

sin and misery and weakneſſe in the creature, and after that he diſcovereth his grace, mercy and power in Chriſt to relieve; firſt, he humbleth, and then liſteth up; firſt, he woundeth, and then he healeth; firſt, he ſmiteth, and then bindeth up; firſt he bringeth down to death, and then reſtoreth unto life, *Iſa.* 6. 1. and, *Pſ.* 9. 3. and therefore, let the afflicted be humbled under the ſenſe of apprehended cauſes of his diſquietneſſe, and ſeek of God the reſtoring of what is loſt or wanting, and the healing of the wound inflicted, in due order. Now Gods order is this, he will, firſt, have the Law magnified, and his Juſtice acknowledged by all afflicted ſinners, even by them who are in the ſtate of Grace, and are not under the covenant or curſe of the Law, to whom notwithſtanding the Law muſt ſtill be a pedagogue to lead them to Chriſt; and when the Lords Juſtice is acknowledged, and all fretting and murmuring againſt his dealing ſtopped, then come in the next place, the diſcovery of grace in Chriſt for, ſince the fall of *Adam*, God hath alwayes been in Chriſt, going about to reconcile the world to himſelf not imputing their tranſgreſſions to them, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. And when God hath drawn the ſinner by faith to the Mediator Chriſt, God incarnat, then there is a matrimonial contract made betwixt God in Chriſt reconciled and the believer, and an union between Chriſt and the believer in a judicial maner; and ſo the believer is made to have a right unto Chriſts perſon, according to that of the Spouſe, *Cant.* 2. 16. *My beloved is mine, and I am his.* And by this means alſo, the believer is made to have right unto Chriſts purchaſe and benefits, and to communion with him and his Saints, as the Apoſtle teacheth us, *Rom.* 32. *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* And after right given to the believer, in due time the Lord giveth and renewеth the earneſt-penny of the inheritance, *Epheſ.* 1. 13. *In whom alſo ye were ſealed with that holy Spirit of promiſe,* who

who really reneweth the believer and giveth him peace, joy, consolation, strength and other gifts of grace, with an ebbing and flowing thereof in the sense and feeling of the believer, as may best serve the good of the believer, and glory of God gracious dispensation: and therefore,

Thirdly, let the afflicted person, whatsoever crosse dispensation he meet with, whatsoever distemper of soul he fall into, whatsoever grace or measure of grace he misse or cometh short of, seek his relief in Gods order; that is to say, let him justifie the Lords wisdom and justice, humble himself under his mighty hand, renewe acts of repentance in humility, turn his face toward Christ by the renewed acts of faith in him, lay hold on his right unto Christs person and benefits, that he may come to the sensible feeling of what he hath right unto by the covenant of Grace. And whatsoever defects, transgressions, temptations unto discouragment and misbelief, do brangle his confidence, let them humble himself indeed, but so as they do not drive him from that Covenant, but be made use of as spurres, and forcible motives to lay the faster hold on Christ and his infinit grace contracted in that Covenant.

17. The eight cause of disquietnesse, is, or may be this, if the true convert, daily lamenting his own sinfulnesse, and daily troubled with suspicion of his own blessed estate, by reason of his felt manifold corruptions, shall meet either with the calumnies of men, or comforters like *Job*'s friends, who in stead of healing his wounds in his affliction, shall foster his suspicion of his estate by uncharitable censure of the poor mans complaint of himself; in this case, if the afflicted do not maintain his righteousnesse by faith in Christ, as *Job* did, and his upright endeavour to please God, which is manifest by his daily godly grief for his short coming in his aimed-at holinesse, no wonder he be disquieted.

18. For removing of this cause, let the afflicted consider and distinguish what is right in him, and what is wrong,

wrong, and beware to confound these. For example, 1. This is right, that he doth not lean to the worth of his own works, nor is puffed up with a vain conceit of himself before God. 2. That he is sensible of his sinfull imperfections and corruptions, and of the bitter root of original sin in him. 3. It is right in him also, that he aimeth toward perfection, forgetting what is behind, and pressing toward the mark and prize of his calling. But this is wrong in him, 1. that he fostereth suspicions unjustly of his own blessed estate. 2. That he doth not observe the work of Gods grace in himself so carefully as he observeth his imperfections and corruptions. 3. That he doth not so much the more make use of Christs imputed righteousnesse, as he findeth the imperfection of his own inherent righteousnesse. 4. That he measureth Gods estimation of him, according to the estimation he hath of himself, when indeed God in Scripture doth shew no lesse approbation of him in his wrestleing, then he doth in the time of his victory and quiet condition. 5. That he doth not observe the difference of the way he doth walk into which is good, from the slidings, imperfections, errors and mistakes in particular actions and passages in that way. 6. That he doth lay more weight oft-times upon the judgment of mistaking spectators of his course, then he hath reason to do, and doth not take heed to the sentence of the Lord in the Gospel, concerning the poor in spirit, the contrite, the meek and lowly disciple. These things let the afflicted consider and make good use thereof, for his encouragment in the way of new obedience.

19. The ninth cause of disquietnesse is, or may be, this, if the true convert be not acquainted with living by faith; for there are many honest and tender-hearted converts, who, in the sense of their sins, are fled unto Christ, resolved never to depart from him, and carefull to lead a blamelesse life, who notwithstanding, whensoever they meet with changes of dispensation, with variety of temptations, fresh feeling of the power of

ſin in themſelves, or any croſſe bodily or ſpiritual, are diſquieted and caſt in ſuſpicion of their ſtate: and albeit they neither will give over to follow after Chriſt, nor will God ſuffer them to periſh, yet they make themſelves an uncomfortable and miſerable life, by their leaning to preſent ſenſe and feeling, when they ſhould remember the ſaying of the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 5. 7. *We walk not by ſight but by faith*) they are caſt down, do mourn and complain, becauſe it is not with them as they would, and are moſt part male-content with their lot, frequently regrating unto God their wants and imperfections, and ſeldom are they praiſing or thanking God for what they have gotten of him.

20. For removing this cauſe, let the afflicted, firſt, conſider what the Apoſtle ſpeaketh to the afflicted Hebrews, *Heb.* 10. 36. *ye have need of patience, that when ye have done the will of God ye may receive the promiſe; for yet a little while, and he that will come, ſhall come, and will not tarry. Now, the juſt man ſhall live by faith,* ſaith he.

Secondly, let him conſider, that to live by faith, doth require theſe ſix duties, 1. That we renounce our own corrupt reaſon and ſenſe, leſt we count that to be our life which may be ſeen or felt, or that which may be altered and changed, but reckon that to be our life, which is hid with God in Chriſt, and ſhall be revealed at the glorious coming of our Lord. 2. That the covenant of grace, and rich promiſes of the Goſpel be eſteemed of us as our meet and drink, whereby our hearts may be ſuſtained in all adverſity, and our hope upholden in patience through the comfort of the Scriptures. 3. That we make uſe of all Gods benefits beſtowed upon us by vertue of that new right made unto us in Chriſt for being partakers thereof. 4. That in all our actions we implore and ſeek our ſtrength from Chriſt, and give him thanks for the meaſure whatſoever he beſtoweth. So did the Apoſtle live, *Gal.* 2. 20. *The life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.* 5. That we rejoyce and glory more in Chriſt

Jeſus

Jesus in the midst of trouble, then we grieve for our troubles whatsoever, whereby as with a sharp pinsell, he is drawing in us the lineaments of his own Image and conformity with himself; So did the Saints, *Rom.* 5. 3, 4, 5. Last of all, to live by faith, requireth that in every condition we should keep faith and a good conscience in Christ Jesus, and esteem our selves blessed of the Lord, albeit we be tossed with troubles immediatly sent from God to exercise us, albeit we do fall in manifold tentations, be assaulted with doubtings, and persecuted unjustly by men: for, it should and may suffice a believer in Christ, if he be not distressed, albeit he be troubled on every side; he must not dispair albeit he be perplexed; he shall not be forsaken, albeit he be persecuted; he shall not be destroyed, albeit he be cast down, 2 *Cor.* 4. 8, 9. Upon these and the like grounds, the Apostle lived a comfortable life, *Phil.* 4, 12. *I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound, every where and in all things I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound and suffer need; I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.* Thus must Christian souldiers live in the midst of their toyling, in warfare, in want of many things, in watching and running hazard of life, in hope of victory and promised glory, holding up their hearts by faith in Christ.

And these things which we have spoken in explication of this case, are not intended to hinder the tender hearted believer from praying, and endeavouring by all means, that the face of the Lord may shine upon him, and that he may be filled with the joy of his Spirit; for we are charged to seek his face and strength continually, *Psal.* 105. 4. But all our speech doth drive at this mainly, that the afflicted in his discouragment and unquietnesse, meekly submit himself to the will of God, howsoever he be exercised, alwayes going on in the way of God according to his vocation, through honour and dishonour, through good report and evil report, looking unto the promises which are made to

him that endureth to the end. And what is ſpoken here of living by faith, muſt not be abuſed to foſter negligence in well doing or bringing forth fruits of faith in every condition, or to hinder the daily exerciſe of repentance, or to require of a Chriſtian a ſtoical ſtupidity under trouble; but the thing we aim at, is, that the Chriſtian in all croſſe diſpenſations and vexations, endeavour by faith to be of good courage in the Lord, and endeavour to draw vertue from Chriſt to bring forth fruits, giving glory to him, whatſoever meaſure he ſhall beſtow more or leſſe, becauſe it is Chriſt who is made unto us wiſdom and righteouſneſſe, ſanctification and redemption, and in him alone ſhall the ſoul of the afflicted have reſt, *Matth.* 11. 24.

CHAP. IX.

Wherein the converts doubt, ariſing from his uncertainty at what time he was converted, is ſolved.

THere are ſome true converts, who after they have paſt a good part of their journey to heaven, begin to halt and make ſlow progreſſe, by doubting whether they be walking in the true converts foot-ſteps, or whether they be converted at all, or not. The reaſon of their doubting, ariſeth from this, that in conference with ſundry of the Saints of their acquaintance, they have obſerved, that every one of them could deſign the time of their converſion, and from that time can reckon their age in Chriſt: Or, from this is their doubt ariſen, that in the Treatiſe of ſome modern Writer, they have read, or from the Sermon of ſome well eſteemed Preacher they have heard ſome ſuch doctrine, whereupon the true convert falleth out with himſelf in ſaying, I was bred and brought up in a godly family, I have followed the exerciſes of religion; after hearing the heads and ſumme of chriſtian Religion, I have embraced the truth; I ſeemed to my ſelf to believe in Chriſt, and entertain the exerciſe of repentance, and

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to endeavour the amendment of my life; I love these whom I see to live holily, and I do hate the wayes of the profane, but because I cannot tell when or what day or year I was really converted, as I know sundry of the godly of my acquaintance can do; therefore I doubt whether my conversion be begun or not, but mean time, though I will not turn off the way I have been following, yet I go on halting and heartlesse till I be cleared of my doubt.

2. For removing this doubt, we must yield this far to the afflicted, that many indeed deceive themselves, who being civilly educated, and from their bairn-age accustomed with the exercises of religion; are nothing beyond the foolish virgins, and do rest satisfied with their own and others opinion of themselves. If such persons be questioned, when they began to repent, or believe in Christ; it is true, they cannot design the time when they were unconverted, but have still been pleased, and are pleased, with their own estate, and in effect were never converted. But it is no lesse true on the other hand, that there are some who indeed are renewed, in whom, peece and peece, without any notable change, faith and repentance, and a holy conversation, have grown with the growing knowledge of the Gospel, and will of God therein; of whom it may be truly said, the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation; of whom it is said, *Mark. 4. 26. So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.*

But to solve the doubt, it maters not whether a man know or not know the day of his conversion, provided he be indeed regenerat and made a new creature. Wherefore the afflicted may be of good courage, if after serious examination of his own conscience, he be humbled frequently in the sense, not only of his actual sins and short-coming of his duty, but also in the sense of his original and in-dwelling corruption or body of

death; if, as he doth indeed loath himself, and renounce all confidence in his best works, so he seriously imbrace the imputed righteousnesse of Christ, and in his strength, by faith in him, doth endeavour to live holily, righteously and soberly, (albeit joyned with many imperfections) he may conclude, he is regenerat: for, if these three be joyned in him in any measure of honesty, he needeth not be anxious what day, moneth or year the holy Spirit began to work these things in him. Only let him give all diligence to grow in humility, faith and new obedience, and to hold on this way, whatsoever doubts or impediments he shall meet with; for, the Apostle exeemeth such a man from the number of hypocrits and unconverted, *Phil.* 3. 3. *We*, saith he, *are the circumcision*, or the Christian converts, *who worship God in the spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

CHAP. X.

Wherein is solved the converts doubt of his regeneration, arising from his apprehension, that the beginning of the change of his life, was not from the sincere love of God, but either from terror or self-love, which he conceiveth to be but carnal.

SOme true converts are, who can design the time of the change of their way from sin to Christ, and to a holy life, whereof they have not only the Church they live in, but also their own conscience witnesses; yet after a considerable time, do fall in suspicion, whether that time of their change was the time of their effectuall calling; some of them bringing no other reason of their doubting, save this, that they were never much troubled with the terrors of the Law, but most part allured to draw near to God, and to eshew the way of sinning by the love of eternal life. Other some, doubting of the soundnesse of their conversion, because the terror of God and fear of condemnation and hell prevailed

vailed more with them, for changing their course, then the love of God and true holinesse did; and both the one sort and the other do conceive the chief rise of their change to have been natural or carnal, self-love, fearing harm, and loving life.

2. For removing of this doubt, we grant, that there are many, who after some notable delivery from death, or some notable benefit received, or after some sharp rod of chastisement for their sin, have changed their outward way of living, left off grosse vices, and led a more civil and blameless outward life, and yet have neither seriously repented them of sin, nor serionsly fled in unto the grace of Jesus Christ offered in the Gospel, neither knowing what saving faith is, nor carefull to know it; but of such we do not speak here, for we are speaking of the true convert and renewed man, who in the sense of sin is fled to Christ, in the sense of his unworthinesse maketh the grace offered his refuge, and in the sense of indigence, looketh up to Christ and seeketh supply of him in all things, and by the holy Spirit is striving against sin, endeavouring in some measure of sincerity to bring forth the fruits of faith and repentance; and yet for all this, he doubteth of the sincerity of his own conversion, for the reasons foresaid. To this souldier and wrestler we say (as before we said to him that doubteth of his conversion, because he cannot design the time of his conversion) it is not material by what way, or means or motives a man is brought unto Christ, provided he doth come and indeed adhere to Christ; it is all one whether the rise of the mans turning from sin to God, was love alluring, or terror driving him, whether a benefit or a sharp rod, whether fear or hope did at the first beginning of his change, move him to seek God; provided, God manifested in the flesh Christ Jesus the Redeemer of sinners, be now his beloved Lord, and precious in his eyes: for, he that is most sweetly allured to come to God, and without much fear is converted, who possibly after serious conviction of sin

and deſerved death, is not keeped long at the door of mercy, but forthwith is admitted to the throne of grace, and tenderly entertained by the Spirit of conſolation, may fall in hard exerciſes afterward. This is evident in the experience of the Prophet *David*, in whom his brethren, living in the ſame family with him, did not perceive any ſignes of a ſorrowfull or heavy heart, as his brother *Eliab*'s words do ſhew, 1 *Sam.* 17. 28. *I know thy pride, and the naughtineſs of thy heart.* Thus did *Eliab* judge of *David*'s chearfull carriage, whereof alſo we have ſome evidence, that *David* was of a ruddy and beautiful countenance, and for ſome years of his youth, did paſſe the time pleaſantly, ſerving God with his ſongs and harp while he was feeding his ſheep in the wilderneſſe: now none can juſtly queſtion his converſion all this time, or his ſincerity in this ſervice, yet afterward he was otherwayes exerciſed: for oft-times he felt the power of the Law upon his ſpirit, and was toſſed with the terror thereof, and made to mourn and weep heavily. Such doth *Job*'s condition ſeem to be in his youth, as it is deſcribed, *Job* 29. but afterward in the tryal of his faith, what a conflict with temptation he had, the ſacred Hiſtory doth teſtifie. Therefore, there is no reaſon why any, in whom theſe evidences of a true Iſraelit are found in any meaſure, ſhould ſuſpect the ſincerity of his regeneration, becauſe he hath been gently handled in his converſion: for it may come to paſſe, that the ſame perſon may fall in firy tryals and ſo hard temptations, as he may fall in doubt of his converſion, in regard of the ſad afflictions inward and outward whereby he is exerciſed. In which caſe he will be found to be miſtaken no leſſe then he was miſtaken in the former caſe and condition; for, ſome dear children of God may poſſibly, both in their converſion and moſt part of their life, be exerciſed with the terrors of the Law, and yet retain faſt hold by faith on Chriſts grace in their deepeſt afflictions: For inſtance, we offer that precious ſoul *Heman* the Ezrait, who came near

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unto *Solomon* in the point of wisdom, 1 *King.* 4, 31. and yet how bitter his afflictions of spirit were, the 88. *Psalm* beareth witnesse, specially, v. 13, 14, 15. *But unto thee have I cryed, O Lord, and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee. And why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me? I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted*, &c. And therefore, there is no just cause, that any in whom the evidences of faith and repentance may be found, should call the sincerity of his own conversion in question, how hardly soever he seem to be handled of God: for whosoever is joyned to the Lord Jesus, and will neither suffer himself to be driven from him, nor yet will endure sin to remain in himself uncontrolled, is certainly a true convert. As for these, who for some temporal cause, are come to Christ (as many did come in the dayes of his flesh) that they might be delivered from some temporal evil, or obtain some temporal benefit, and for that cause do doubt of their conversion or sincerity thereof; they need not dispute much about the occasions of their first seeking after God, provided that they have learned what Christs grace is, and do seek righteousnesse and salvation in him; for, we read in the Evangel, that sundry, that they might be cured of leprosie, palsie, blindnesse, &c. came unto Christ, who afterward came and adhered to him by faith, as the only Redeemer and Saviour of their souls from sin and misery. Wherefore, in such doubtings, let not the afflicted trouble himself, nor call his conversion in question; but let him give all diligence to strengthen his faith, and to increase in holinesse, making his calling and election sure by well-doing: for, if he do this, he shall neither be found idle, *nor unfruitfull in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus*, as the Apostle promiseth, 2 *Pet.* 1. 8.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Wherein the converts doubt of his being in the ſtate of grace, ariſing from heavy afflictions and grievous tentations, is ſolved.

SOme true converts ſometime fall into great ſuſpicions of their regeneration, of their effectual calling, and of the love of God unto them, and that becauſe they meet with ſore outward afflictions, and are aſſaulted alſo poſſibly with horrible inward tentations which do befall them unexpectedly, and are ready to ſwallow them up; for whereas, after divers conflicts in their converſion, and peace of conſcience following after theſe ſad exerciſes of mind, they hoped to have injoyed Gods peace ſtill after, they do meet poſſibly with ſad calamities which they did not foreſee nor fear, and being yoked in conflict with more fearfull tentations then ever before, which they find themſelves unable to overcome, they ſeem to themſelves, to have juſt cauſe to call in queſtion all the former work of grace in themſelves, and to doubt of their regeneration, and of their reconciliation with God. Of this ſort, ſome who lived in great wealth and outward proſperity, do fall in ſo deep poverty, that they are neither able to ſuſtain themſelves nor their families, but are forced to live on the private charity of others, or openly to beg. Other ſome do fall in heavy ſickneſſes, yea, in uncouth diſeaſes, which but rarely do befall any, which ſeem to be evidences of the wrath of God. Other ſome do fall in horrible tentations, and are troubled with blaſphemous ſuggeſtions againſt God and the holy Scripture, and the way of the Saints, which as fiery darts do ſtick faſt unto them, and diſquiet them continually. Other ſome are tempted unto hainous ſins and to ſuch wickedneſſe againſt themſelves or others, as nature doth abhor, to which acts of wickedneſſe they find themſelves ſo powerfully ſolicted, as they fear God hath decreed

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to give them over, and that they shall be overcome with the tentations; some after one way, some after another way, by one sort or other of vexation, are tossed, so as they suspect God is pursuing them in wrath and dealing with them otherwayes then with any of his children. Whereupon oft-times they break forth in sad complaints, and misbelieving suspicions, saying, if God loved me he would not deal thus and thus with me; if I were a true convert, and reconciled with God, he would not thus pursue me; my case is not the case of the children of God, for any thing I know, and other such like regrates and lamentations are uttered by them.

2. For solving this doubt, we neither esteem such exercises, and tentations proper to the regenerat man, or a token of regeneration; neither do we deny, that such exercises may befall true converts: for, all sorts of afflictions and calamities are common to the good and evil, to the godly and the wicked, so that by those troubles and miseries neither the love or hatred of God can be certainly concluded; but thus much may be said in reason, if these calamities do befall a man, while he is walking in his own sinfull wayes, then are they undoubtedly to be interpret as evidences of Gods wrath, at least fatherly anger, against the afflicted, and to be esteemed as forewarnings of more and more heavy calamities to come upon him, yea, and finall perdition also, if he do not repent.

3. In which case the afflicted shall do well to humble himself before God, and give a good construction of Gods purpose in sending on him such calamities, in regard when he might forthwith have destroyed the sinner, he hath sent forth these sad afflictions to waken his conscience, and to warn him to flye from the wrath to come, least he perish utterly.

4. He shall do well also to consider with himself, and to acknowledge, that such a bitter potion was necessary, in so deadly and desperat-like disease, as his soul was

was lying into: for, what ſhould the Lord do unto thoſe who deſpiſe the worth of their own ſouls and of eternal life, and do ſeek their felicity in vain and periſhing pleaſure, profit and honour? what ſhall he do with thoſe whom he will not ſuffer to periſh with this evil world, but break their Idols in pieces and put themſelves to grief, who vex his holy Spirit?

Wherefore let the afflicted read his ſin in the rod wherewith he is beaten; if he be deprived of temporal goods, or earthly comforts, which he hath abuſed to the hazard of his own ſoul, let God have the glory of his juſtice and mercy alſo, in that he by cutting off earthly things from him, is ſending him to ſeek things ſpiritual and everlaſting in heaven, where Chriſt is at the right hand of the Father, *Col.* 3. 2.

If he be vexed with tentations unto blaſphemies, and ſuch horrid fearfull ſins which even nature doth abhor, let him conſider, that misbelief of threatenings and promiſes are no leſſe in effect, than real aſſerting of blaſphemies, and that entertaining of ſinfull luſts which fight againſt his ſoul, is in effect a defiling and deſtroying of his own ſoul; by which afflictions and tentations, if the afflicted take not warning and repent, he may juſtly fear theſe calamities and tormenting tentations are but the beginnings of ſorrows.

But if theſe calamities and fearfull tentations befall a man walking in the wayes of God, who is a believer in Chriſt, who hath caſten his anchor within the vail, and ſtudieth in any meaſure of uprightneſſe to pleaſe God, let not ſuch a man be afraid; for, God is not purſuing him in wrath, as Sathan his adverſary ſuggeſteth, but as a moſt wiſe and loving father is trying, and training his faith, and bringing forth the evidence of grace beſtowed upon him, to the praiſe of his own name, ſhaming of Sathan and edifying all beholders of this mans exerciſe: Wherefore let the afflicted comfort himſelf in the Lord, and be ſtrong in the faith of holy Scripture, which is granted to the Church for upholding

ing of believers in patience and hope of the promiſed reward: for even *Job*, the holieſt man on earth in his generation, was both ſudainly ſurprized with a multitude of concurring calamities, and alſo deprived of all conſolation from God and man for a ſeaſon; for at once he was ſpoiled of all his goods, deprived of all his children, tempted by his wife to diſpair, deſpiſed by his ſervants, judged to be a hypocrit by his moſt intire godly friends, ſtricken by Sathan with an unuſuall plague of botch-biles; and how far the Lord did hide all comfort for a time, the hiſtory of his complaints make evident. Yea, our bleſſed Lord Jeſus Chriſt, hath ſanctified in his own perſon, the hardeſt exerciſes of this ſort which his children can fall into; for albeit he could not be defiled with ſin, yet he was tempted of Sathan unto moſt abominable ſins, in ſpecial he was tempted to caſt himſelf down from the pinacle of the Temple, which was to kill himſelf; he was tempted to fall down and worſhip the devil, which O how horrible blaſphemy is it? yea, for a time power was given to Sathan, albeit not to hurt Chriſt, yet to carry his body from one place to another, as we read in *Matth.* 4. and therefore let this be for conſolation to ſuch of Gods children as are vexed with vile and blaſphemous tentations, and ſoliſtations to abominable ſins, *Heb.* 2. 18. *for in that our Lord himſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted.*

4. But if the afflicted inſiſt and ſay he is ſo put to it by Sathans tentations to commit ſin againſt his light, and is ready to ſuccumb, becauſe he neither hath ſtrength in himſelf to reſiſt and ſtand out, nor is their appearance or hope of Gods aſſiſting him in his conflict, becauſe God ſeemeth to have not only deſerted him, but alſo to have given him over in the hands of an unclean ſpirit to be vexed.

Unto this tentation we anſwer, firſt, that the dearеſt of Gods children have been exerciſed after this maner, for even to the Apoſtle *Paul* (2 *Cor.* 12. 7.) there

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was given to him *a thorne in the flesh, the messenger of Sathan to buffet him*, to keep him from pride: which tentation was so strong and violent, that he could not resist it by any strength in himself, but was forced to flye unto God by prayer and beg strength from Christ to bear him out against the tentation and to be delivered from the power of it.

Secondly, let the afflicted under this exercise put a difference between the sin of Sathan the tempter of him, and his own sin under the tentation; for, the fiery darts of Sathan, and suggested blasphemies are Sathans sins, and not properly the sins of the afflicted to whom these wicked tentations are not pleasant, but are his greatest affliction. It is true indeed, that tentations unto sin in some measure draw on some degree of pollution oft-times in sinfull men, because it is not with us as it was with Christ; for when the prince of this world came to tempt him, he had no stuff of his own in Christ to work upon; but when he cometh to sinners, he findeth our corrupt nature and inclination to yield to his tentations, as his own materials to work upon, ready to be kindled by his fiery darts; and yet must we still distinguish the sin of Sathan suggesting and tempting, from the suffering of the poor afflicted child of God, who is vexed, with the tentation: for if the afflicted shall own the tentation as his own sin, and confound Sathans part, and his own part in that exercise, he is in danger to be swallowed up in the sense of the sin which is not his own but Sathans.

Thirdly, the afflicted must put difference between sin and troublsome exercise: for God is the author of trouble, whereby he is about to try, exercise and train the faith of his child, to teach him patience, and hope under his trouble; but Sathan is the author of the sin, whereunto he doth tempt the afflicted, and shall be punished for it.

Fourthly, let the afflicted wisely observe Sathans drift, and wiles to drive him unto sin one way or other by

by these his horrid and bitter tentations; for though he prevail not with his grosser tentations, to cause the afflicted commit or consent unto that wickedness which he suggesteth by his fiery darts, yet he in some measure prevaileth oft-times by new tentations following on the back of the other; for when he hath troubled the soul of the afflicted child of God with these terrible tentations, then he beareth in upon the mind of the afflicted, that he hath acted or consented to these vile blasphemies, and solliciteth him to impatience, under this trouble, and to doubt of Gods love to him, and of his being in the state of grace, and to suspect he is not one of the elect, and to fear that God will not deliver him from these evils whereunto he is tempted. Now, these latter tentations oft-times prevail so far with the afflicted, as he hearkens unto them, yields unto them in some measure and suspects Sathans false alledgance to be too true. And so these acts of unbelief, impatience and discouragment, become indeed the sins of the afflicted, because they are not so resisted, disclaimed, abhorred and sorrowed for, as the first sort of tentations were, which do most vex the afflicted. These wiles of Sathan the afflicted must beware of, least he continue in, or foster these ordinary sins, wherein-to, that Sathan might cast and catch him, he did lay his net in these extraordinary tentations.

Fifthly, let the afflicted after he hath perceived Sathans wiles and malice, and his own foolishness and weakness, look upon the Lords wise purpose, who by suffering his child so to be exercised, is calling him to a deeper acknowledgment of his original sin, that he may be humbled yet more before God, and loath himself yet more, and have Christs righteousness imputed to the believer in higher estimation. Upon which consideration, let him so presse the removing of the troublesome tentation, as in the mean time he submit himself unto God, and patiently endure the trouble, and put repentance and faith, hope and love to God

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in exercise, following his external vocation as he is able, least Sathan take advantage of him if he be idle; and withal let him have such a care of his bodily health as he may be fitted the better for Gods service in his calling: for we are not our own, but Christs, who hath bought us with a price, and are bound to glorifie God both in our bodies and spirits, which are the Lords, 2 *Cor.* 6. 19, 20. and therefore, whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever else we are about, which is lawfull, we ought to do it in his name, and so to glorifie him, 1 *Cor.* 10. 30.

CHAP. XII.

Wherein is solved, the converts doubt of his conversion, arising from the power of his corruption manifesting it self more after his entry upon the course of new obedience, then it did before he began to repent.

SOme converts being yet but young souldiers in the Christian warfare, when they find the corruption of their nature breaking forth more powerfully then it did before they did ingage their heart to serve the Lord, do readily fall in deep discouragment and sad suspicion, that the renewing grace of God was never bestowed upon them, whatsoever were their purposes, promises, and beginnings to mortifie their lusts and affections. And we must confesse, that this is no small tentation: for, they who have renounced the service of their lusts, and have consecrat their life to Gods service, when they find their lusts prevail, and like to reign in them, no wonder they suspect their state in grace; for (2 *Pet. chap.* 2. *ver.* 20.) it is told to us, *If men after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein, and overcome, the latter ends worse with them then the beginning*: for, it had been better for them, not to have known the way of righteous-

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neſſe, then after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them, according to the true proverbe, *the dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the ſow that was waſhed to her wallowing in the mire.*

2. This condition indeed is perilous, when after profeſſion of repentance, ſin doth recover its ſtrength again, and prevail over the whole man, and ſhew forth its victory over him in the groſſe pollution of the external man: But moſt of all is it perilous, when the overcome and inſlaved ſinner, lyeth ſtill in his ſin, ſenſeleſſe and ſecure, and doth pleaſe himſelf in his pollutions; for, whatſoever he may be, the holy Ghoſt points him forth among the unregenerat as a dog or ſow. If ſuch a man after a time ſhall repent and bewail his condition, and ſet himſelf to the ſeeking of God in Chriſt, and to draw grace out of Chriſt to mortifie his luſts, we ſhall not pronounce or determine of his former eſtate, whether he was before that time regenerat or not, but for the preſent caſe of his repenting, he is on the way to evidence his regeneration more clearly then before: only let him take heed to humble himſelf in earneſt before God, and to repent more ſeriouſly, that ſo he may confirm himſelf, and go on in the courſe of faith and obedience of the Evangel, ſtrengthening his brethren as *Peter* was commanded to do by our Lord, *Luk.* 22. 22.

3. But if corruption of nature do not break forth to defile the whole man, but inwardly ſtirreth and ſtriveth to bring its old ſervant into bondage again; unto which tentations albeit the afflicted do not ſuccumbe, yet he is ſhaken and ſtaggers in his faith, doubting of his ſtate, and of the ſincerity of his converſion, becauſe he findeth the power of ſin in him more vigorous, then he had found it before the change of his old converſation. We do not deny, but this caſe is readily incident unto ſuch as are lately converted, from formality in religion, and fair civil carriage before men, to true repentance and inward holineſſe beſeeming Chriſti-

ans. This caſe becauſe it may have ſundry cauſes, doth require alſo ſundry cures.

4. Firſt, this caſe may befall a young convert, who becauſe he hath not as yet gotten the experience of his own weakneſſe, is ſomewhat puffed up in the conceit of his own ſtrength, and is more confident then he hath reaſon, that the ſincerity of his purpoſe, ſhall bear down and overcome all his ſpiritual enemies, ſo oft as they ſhall oppoſe his holy reſolution. In this caſe, what wonder is it, that the Lord by a new proof of the mans weakneſſe, let him ſee, that it is not in him that willeth or in him that runneth, but in God that hath mercy? to the intent his pride may be broken down, and that he being humbled in himſelf, may learn not to truſt any more to himſelf, but to God, to Chriſt who by his Spirit maketh his children to mortifie ſin in themſelves, as the Apoſtle teacheth us, *Rom.* 8. 13. ſaying, *if ye mortifie the deeds of the fleſh by the Spirit, ye ſhall live.*

Therefore the afflicted in this caſe, muſt beware to fret, or murmure, or entertain ſuſpicions of Gods grace in himſelf, but rather let him, after experience of his own weakneſſe, humble himſelf and renew the exerciſe of repentance, and reſolve in the uſe of the means to lean to the ſtrength of Chriſt who doth help his ſouldiers in their conflict againſt ſin and Sathan, either by giving them the victory quickly, or elſe ſuſtaining them in the conflict by his grace, as he did the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. to whom Chriſt did not grant the victory, till he, deſpairing of his own ability to ſtand out againſt the meſſenger of Sathan, did humbly beg deliverance from the tentation, and then he gave him aſſurance, that the aſſiſtance of his grace ſhould prove ſufficient to ſuſtain him in the conflict, and to deliver him in due time.

Secondly, this caſe may fall out by the meer malice of Sathan, who doth ſet himſelf to vex the young and tender convert, lately taken out of his dominion, to the intent he may make him repent his coming out of

Egypt,

Egypt, if it be possible, and by leading out against him a new army of temptations, may move him to despair of the victory, and so bring him back to the flesh pots, and taking on again the yoke of bondage if he can.

2. And here consideration must be had, of Gods wise and holy permission, who suffereth Sathan to put a young convert to so hard tryals, that in the weakness of his own child, he may make evident his great power, in upholding his young souldier against the forest assaults of Sathan; and his wisdom, in breaking by this mean the strength of in-born corruption, raging against the work of grace in his child.

In this case, let the afflicted remember he is called to give a proof of his faith and sincerity, that he may acquit himself manfully, and not be afraid of the power of temptations but bear out stoutly, resisting Sathan, being confident of the victory and of tramping Sathan under his feet shortly; yea, pre-suppose with inward temptations, external persecution be joyned, let the Lords souldier follow the example of the godly Hebrews, whom the Apostle doth exhort to prepare themselves, after spoliation of their goods, to meet with grievous affliction, under hope to overcome, *Heb.* 10. 32. 36. and, 12. 4.

3. This case may fall out, not so much from the growing power of corruption, as from the growing light of grace, discovering sin more clearly then before regeneration: for he, who before regeneration, was lying dead in sin, did not feel the weight of sin at all, or was sensible only of grosse out-breakings, but when the clearer light of the Law doth come, opening up the dens and caves of natures corruption, out of which come forth legions of sinfull motions, and amongst these, sundry monsters of unperceived wickedness, are discovered to the young convert, what wonder he be afraid, and cast in many doubts and suspicions? For, if even the Apostle *Paul* himself, out of the sense of inherent sin, and

of the bonds thereof, where-with he did find himself bound, was compelled with tears to cry out, *Miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. 7. 24. what wonder is it that a novice in Religion do tremble when he seeth and smelleth the dunghill and filthy stable of his own unclean heart?

In this case, all the comforts which the Gospel doth furnish are to be ministred to the afflicted, hope is to be fostered in him of victory over all those evils; the wisdom of God is to be set forth before his eyes under this exercise, wherein the Lord hath brought to light the latent corruption of nature, of set purpose, that he might yoke his young souldier in combat with it, and give him the victory by the holy Ghost, over not only those evils which do trouble him for the time, but also all other sins, and so promoveth the mortification and abolition of the whole body of corruption in him.

4. The fourth cause is, or may be this, that the afflicted hath not such estimation of the imputed righteousnesse of Christ as is requisit, but with the slighting of Christs satisfaction and righteousnesse purchased to the believer by Christ, goeth about to establish his own righteousnesse, whereupon the Lord discovereth his short-coming in sanctification, which in this life is imperfect, and should indeed be followed after carefully, but not be rested upon. It is indeed natural unto us, to seek to have perfection in our selves, for our own glory, and not to follow the way prescribed to us of God, for perfecting of us unto the glory of God, as may be seen in the flower of *Israel* after the flesh, *Rom.* 9. and 10. Now the order of God is, that we should be first justified by faith in Christ without the works of the law, that is, God will have us in the first place to confesse unto him our sins, and renounce all confidence in our own works before, in, and after our conversion, and to renounce all confidence in our own worthinesse or our own strength, and betake us to that righteousnesse, which by the obedience and satisfaction of Christ is purchased

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unto us, and offered in the Goſpel to be accounted ours of meer free grace: In the ſecond place, God will have us, being cloathed with Chriſts imputed righteouſneſſe, to approach unto the throne of grace, that by faith in Chriſt, we may receive the power of the holy Spirit in a larger and larger meaſure for encreaſing our ſanctification more and more. And in the third place, he will have us, as we profit and grow in holineſſe, to give the thanks and praiſe and glory thereof unto God in Jeſus Chriſt, who both juſtifieth us and ſanctifieth us by his own Spirit; and in as far as we come ſhort in the meaſure of ſanctification which we aim at, he will have us to be humbled in our ſelves, and lay faſter hold on Chriſt who juſtifieth us, that he, by his Spirit, may more and more ſanctifie us, and that becauſe Chriſt is made of God unto us, not only our righteouſneſſe, but alſo our ſanctification, as the Apoſtle teacheth us, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Now, when any man breaks this order, and ſeeketh juſtification by Chriſt, but ſanctification by himſelf, as it were; and when he findeth ſanctification not to grow as he hoped it ſhould, doth not flye in to the garment of Chriſts imputed righteouſneſſe, which alone is able to hide his nakedneſſe, Rev. 3. 18. but in ſtead of humbling himſelf in the exerciſe of repentance, is ready to call his juſtification and converſion in queſtion, and to caſt it away, as it were, what wonder is it, that God, being juſtly offended, becauſe the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt is not in due eſtimation and precious in that mans eyes, doth not grant unto him a better meaſure of ſanctification, eſpecially while he is contending to have his own preſcribed meaſure of ſanctification, with the prejudice of that divine righteouſneſſe which is by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, and will not, as a humble penitent, hold grip of Chriſts righteouſneſſe, except he obtain ſuch a meaſure of ſanctification and freedom from wreſtling with ſin, as he hath reſolved to find in himſelf before he can ſtand to his intereſt in Chriſt for juſtification? What won-

der is it, that God ſuffer ſin in the afflicted to put forth its power more then before, that he may teach his young convert and ſouldier, ignorant of his duty and of Gods order of proceeding with his children, to be more wiſe, and to adhere more cloſely under the ſenſe of his ſinfulneſſe, unto the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, unto which he did flye and was forced to flye in his converſion? As alſo, that he may teach his child, that ſanctification muſt be drawn out of no other fountain then Chriſt, out of whoſe fulneſſe we muſt receive grace for grace, and who by faith applyeth to his redeemed ones his imputed righteouſneſs, and by faith applyeth and worketh in them ſanctification purchaſed unto them in the covenant of Redemption?

5. Wherefore, for remedy of this miſtake, firſt, let the afflicted, when he perceiveth and feeleth the power of ſin to be more then he conceived he ſhould have found in himſelf after his converſion, let him (I ſay) forthwith humble himſelf before God, acknowledge his natural uncleanneſſe, and utter inability by his own ſtrength to reſiſt ſin, and being humbled at the heart, let him bleſſe God, who of his free grace hath prepared and freely granted unto him a righteouſneſſe purchaſed by Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. with which being cloathed, he may ſtand before the Tribunal of grace abſolved. Next, let him earneſtly and daily pray, that he may both hold faſt grips of that righteouſneſſe of Chriſt by faith, and out of the ſame fountain of Gods glorious grace in Chriſt, ſtudy to increaſe in ſanctification, and peece and peece to mortifie and aboliſh the corruption of nature. Thirdly, let the afflicted uſe the ordinances and means appointed of God for mortifying of ſin and reparation of the Image of God in him. And fourthly, let the afflicted, in the uſe of appointed means and ordinances of God, by faith look unto Chriſt, that out of him he may ſuck ſap, and the furniture of his Spirit, to bring forth good fruits: for, *without him we can do nothing; but if we abide in him, we ſhall bring forth abundant fruits*, Joh. 15. 5.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Wherein is solved the converts doubt, whether he be in the state of grace, arising from his comparing of himself with the hypocrit and unregenerat In those perfections they may attain unto.

SOmetime a true convert, when he perceiveth how far specious hypocrits may make progresse in the way of righteousnesse, with how many vertues they may be indued, with how many gifts they may be adorned, how-like the foolish virgins may be unto the wise, and how far temporary faith may carry a man, especially when it is busked with spiritual common gifts, how many glorious professors of the true christian Religion have made apostasie, how many wayes men do deceive themselves and may possibly further and further deceive themselves (of which self-deceivings somewhat is spoken in the end of the former book) what wonder is it, the weak convert stagger, and fear least he also deceive himself, especially when he seeth nothing in himself which may not be counterfeit?

1. For louſing of this doubt, wherein many have been puſled, we muſt yield to the afflicted, that there are many indeed, who do deceive and destroy themselves with their vain thoughts; which becauſe it doth very frequently come to paſſe, it ſhould ſtir up all men to be circumſpect and wary least they deceive themselves in the mater of their ſalvation, and for that intent to examine themselves whether they be in the faith, 2 *Cor.* 13. least they be beguiled, and ſo periſh. And becauſe tender faith is eaſily hurt, all their fear muſt be turned into a holy carefulneſſe, to be found sincere and ſerious in the uſe of the Lords ordinances, least Sathan beguile them on the right hand or on the left. And for this end, we offer advice to the afflicted to diſcern things that differ, and firſt to diſtinguiſh gifts, common to hypocrits and true converts, from saving graces or be-

nefits accompanying ſalvation: for, learning, and skill to govern great maters, and eloquence and underſtanding of deep myſteries, and revelation of things to come, and the gift of working miracles, and the gift of preaching the Goſpel, may be granted unto the unregenerat for the uſe and edification of the Church. The obſerving of this difference ſhall teach the afflicted to eſteem well of all the gifts of God, which may ſerve for humane ſociety, or to edifie the Church, but not to look upon them as evidences of regeneration, for they are nothing in compariſon of ſaving graces; for, if he ſhall ſtudy to humility and repentance toward God and faith toward Jeſus Chriſt, and love to God and his Saints, and to a holy life by the grace of Chriſt, in any meaſure, let him eſteem more of them, then of all theſe common gifts how glorious ſoever they ſeem. As alſo let him put a difference betwixt the judgment of charity concerning other mens eſtate, which contents it ſelf with probabilities, and the judgment of certainty and reall verity, concerning his own eſtate, which proceeds from the operation of the holy Spirit, bearing witneſſe to our ſpirits, that we are the children of God, and revealing unto us what things are freely given to us of God, to wit, among other gifts, giving unto us eye-ſalve to make us know, that we are blind, poor, naked and miſerable, with grace leading us to buy without money or price from Chriſt, gold tryed in the fire, and garments to hide our nakedneſſe, which is the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt imputed unto us. In the judgement of charity concerning other mens eſtate, we ſee nothing ſave what is outward, and cannot pierce into their hearts, which God only can and doth ſearch; but concerning our own eſtate, we may know certainly, if we ſearch well, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10, 11, 12. Wherefore that the afflicted may overcome this doubt, let him leave unto God the judgment of the hearts of theſe hypocrits and apoſtats, which were never humbled in a ſenſe of ſin, nor ſeriouſly believed in Chriſt; but

to satisfie himself concerning his own estate, let him study to discern the power of sin in himself more and more, and daily be humbled before God in the sense of it. And the more he discern the loathsomnesse of sin in himself, let him the more heartily embrace Christ offered in the Gospel and consecrat himself wholly unto him, that in his furniture, drawn by faith out of Christ, he may bring forth good fruits and add one vertue to another, and so shall he be sure, that he hath passed the perfection of the unregenerat, and is a true subject of the kingdom of God effectually called, and elected of God unto eternall life, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8.

CHAP. XIV.

Wherein is solved the doubt of the true convert, whether he be in the state of grace, because some godly persons look upon him as an hypocrit.

SOme true converts, do suspect themselves not to be true converts, because some of the godly of their acquaintance (whose judgment otherwayes is not to be lightly rejected) not only do suspect them to be hypocrits, but by words spoken of them and behaviour toward them, declare their judgment of them.

2. This tentation doth not a little afflict the weak in faith, who of themselves are ready to call in question their own conversion, and when they perceive their own suspicion of themselves to be as it were confirmed by the suspicion and testimony of some Saints (howsoever rashly judging other mens hearts) no wonder the tentation of Sathan, questioning whether they be the children of God, grow strong against them.

By this stratageme Sathan useth to assault the strongest in faith, and to vex them at least, as we may see in the exercise of *Job*, whose faith was mightily assaulted when his godly friends mistook his affliction, and condemned him as a wicked hypocrit. The like we see in

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the exercise of the Prophet, *Psal.* 38. 11. when his friends stood aloof from his plague.

3. For strengthening the afflicted under this tentation; first, let him examine himself so much the more acuratly, because of the suspicion that the godly have of him: after which examination, if he find any measure of sorrow for sin in himself, and of faith flying to Christ for relief, and of endeavour to live holily, righteously and soberly, albeit joyned with much infirmity and manifold imperfections, let him not cast away his confidence, but rather strengthen what he findeth of the Lords gracious work in him, although it seem to him ready to dye.

Secondly, let him consider whether this exercise and affliction be a correction from God, chastising him for his rash judgment of others, whom possibly he hath wounded with such rash suspicions of them; but whether he find this or not, let him not despise this exercise, but be humbled before God in the acknowledgment of the reliques of hypocrisie in our corrupt nature, and flye unto Christ (in whose mouth there was no guile) that he may be cloathed with his righteousnesse head and feet; and let him study unto more and more sincerity, that he may approve himself to God, and to discreet Judges of his conversation, and let him not alienat himself altogether so far as in him lyeth from them, by whose suspicions his faith and good name hath been wounded, but in humility and charity toward them, in the constant following of piety toward God and righteousnesse toward men, labour to commend himself to all mens consciences.

And in so doing he needeth not stand for the rash judgment of any man: for by so doing *Job* was victorious over this tentation in his conflict with his friends: and it is sure, that men may be deceived in their judgement of other mens estate; for, first, the ignorance of another mans heart, maketh the Judge to judge what he knoweth not. It is true, God hath granted unto his

his children liberty according to his Word to judge of the actions of other men, and from their actions to judge of their condition and temper in relation to those actions; but to judge of their ſtate who outwardly do what is right, doth not belong to men, but to God who hath reſerved to himſelf the ſearching of every mans heart, and only knoweth who is the upright and who is the hypocrit, who is the wiſe and who is the fooliſh virgin, the outward converſation of both being like one to another. Again, to know another mans manners, ingine, inclination and way of his life, doth require long converſing with him, compariſon of his actions one with another, and a prudent conjunction of all ſignes of his inward diſpoſition, before a diſcreet charitable judgment can be had of him. And whoſoever do judge raſhly of other mens hearts, do not well know their own heart, or of what ſpirit they are in judging: for many preſume too much to juſtifie their own condition and ſtate, and make themſelves to be as rules and paterns unto others, and ſo become too too rigid cenſurers and ſevere judges of other mens conditions and ſtate, except they find it like to their own. And if there be any diſſimilitude of manners or diſcrepance of judgment, or contention about any mater, then partiality hindereth a right judgment one of another, and affection marreth reaſon many times that it cannot diſcern what is right.

Therefore let the perſon afflicted with this tentation, turn himſelf to God who ſearcheth the reines, and let him humble himſelf in his ſight, renewing the exerciſe of repentance and faith in Chriſt, and let him apply to himſelf what the Scripture doth pronounce of theſe who in the ſenſe of their ſin do flye to Chriſt Jeſus, that in him they may have remiſſion of ſin and amendment of their life: for ſo did the Prophet in the whole *Pſal.* 17. when he had to do with his uncharitable friends and kinsfolk, and ſo let the afflicted do.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Wherein the converts doubting of his being in the ſtate of grace, ſo oft as he doth not feel the ſenſe of his reconciliation with God, is examined and anſwered.

SOme true converts are, who indeed are indued with the ſaving graces of faith, hope and charity, and give evident proof of the in-dwelling of the holy Spirit in them, and do rejoyce now and then in God their Saviour, when his love to them is ſhed abroad in their heart, but when a cloud cometh over their eyes, and they do not feel the warm beams of the Sun of righteouſneſſe ſhining in their ſoul as they before have felt, they are aſſaulted with doubting if any saving grace be in them at all, and do entertain theſe tentations oftimes, ſo far as to ſuſpect and expreſſe in words, that there is no ſolid faith in themſelves, no lively hope, no chriſtian charity, no mortification of ſin, no purity of heart, and ſuch like; if when they are thus tempted and toſſed they lay hold on Chriſt, as in their firſt converſion, and find the ſenſible comfort of the holy Spirit by the word of the Goſpel applyed unto them, then all is well, their doubting is overcome for the time, they rejoyce and praiſe God: But if the Lord ſhall delay, for his own wiſe ends, to renew their ſenſible conſolations, and to renew the earneſt-penny of their inheritance, forthwith they begin to doubt again, and to hearken to Sathans ſuggeſtions, and to ſuſpect that their former feelings were but temporary, and not the ſpecial operations of the holy Spirit, and at length break forth in many ſad complaints. And, in a word, they do not maintain the work of ſaving grace in themſelves longer then the ſun ſhine of ſpiritual felt conſolations abideth with them. And albeit their exerciſe be no wayes ſo hard as was the Prophets, *Pſal.* 77. yet they fall out in the ſame complaint which the Prophet expreſſeth, *ver.* 7, 8, 9. *Will the Lord caſt off for ever? and*

and will he be favourable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies.

2. For clearing of this case, two diseases may be perceived in the afflicted which is here described. The one is this, the afflicted setteth himself to live rather by sense then by faith, and doth put his faith on work of set purpose that he may obtain or recover consolation shortly; but if his desire be not shortly granted, he maketh not use of the formerly felt consolations to strengthen his own faith when consolation is withdrawn. The other sickness is this, the afflicted doth not take up the nature of saving graces, nor perceive the beauty thereof, except in the sun-shine of sensible divine approbation thereof, he doth not take up the right definition or description of saving graces: for, faith is to him nothing, if it be not a full perswasion; except he can pour forth tears alwayes, he thinks he doth not repent; except he find a joyfull expectation of Christs coming in glory, he thinks his hope not lively; and so of charity and patience, temperance, righteousnesse and holinesse, if he do not find them in some eminent measur as they may near-by stand before the law, the afflicted of whom we are now speaking, thinketh he hath nothing of saving grace in him. We grant, that this sickness is very rare. and few they are that are troubled with it; yet where it appeareth, it must be speedily cured, but with great circumspection cured; for the earnest desire he hath of feeling the sweet sense of the joy of the holy Ghost, must not be disallowed, but commended to him, and he taught to cry as it is said, *Cant. 2. 5. Stay me with flaggons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love*, yet with holy submission unto Gods will for time, maner and measure. 2. He is also to be commended, that in his trouble he goeth to God in Christ, not altogether without faith which he putteth forth in active exercise thereof by confession

confeſſion of ſin, by ſupplication and otherwayes; but here is he to be reproved, that while he is actually exerciſing faith, love, hope, &c. he reckoneth all he doeth to be nothing, no faith, no hope, &c. becauſe it is not in ſuch a meaſure as he would. 3. He is to be commended, that he doth aime at the higheſt degrees of faith, love, hope, patience, mortification of ſin, and practice of holineſſe, and all commanded vertues; but here he faileth, that he counteth all as nought, when conſolation and ſenſible approbation of what he hath is not felt; for here he deſpiſeth the day of ſmall things, and unthankfully miſ-regardeth the lower degrees of theſe ſaving graces, which notwithſtanding are bought to the redeemed by the ſame price wherewith the higheſt degrees are bought, to wit, with the precious blood of Jeſus Chriſt.

3. Wherefore let the afflicted conſider, firſt, that the will of God revealed, requireth of us, that we walk by faith, and under the ſenſe of our ſinfulneſſe and afflictions whatſoever, hold faſt the covenant of grace in Chriſt Jeſus, and by adhering unto him hold up our heart and entertain ſpiritual life in us. Secondly, let him conſider, that this way of living by faith and dependence on the word of Gods grace, doth pleaſe the Lord well; for, without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe him; and thus living by faith in him, doth give more glory of truth, grace, mercy and conſtancy unto God then when we ſuſpend the glorifying of him, till we find the ſenſe of conſolation from him: for if we believe in God, only becauſe we find the conſolations of his Spirit, our faith in that caſe is weak, and leaneth more upon the pledge and ſenſible evidence of his truth beſtowed upon us, then upon his promiſe without a pledge: for, no man will refuſe to give credit to a man upon a pawn, but God is worthy to be credited upon his word without a pawn, yea, when his diſpenſation ſeemeth contrary to his promiſe. Thirdly, let him conſider, that the Lord uſeth to give ſenſible conſolations

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not only to help our faith, in the time of conſolation, but alſo to help our faith when the conſolations are withdrawn from us, and we are put to hard exerciſe: wherein it is our duty to glorifie our God for his truth and grace, whereof we have ſometime had confirmations by felt conſolation, and patiently to wait till he reſtore unto us the joy of his Spirit: for if in the want of ſenſible conſolation we ſhall put aſperſions upon the Lords work and graces beſtowed upon us, and call them in queſtion, we ſhall be found in ſo doing more carefull of ſelf-ſatisfaction then to do the duties which God requireth of us. Fourthly, let the afflicted learn ſo to deſcribe and define every ſaving grace of faith, repentance, hope, love and mortification of ſin, as the deſcription may take in the meaneſt meaſure of thoſe graces; for, it is hard to ſay, that there is no ſound faith where there is not a full perſwaſion; for the hungry looking of a trembling ſinner unto Chriſt, muſt not be excluded from being an act of faith; it is hard to reſtrain the exerciſe of repentance to the ſheding of tears, for many other ſigns of repentance may be found where theſe are ſeldom, ſuch as is the hatred of ſin ſtriving againſt all tentations unto it, and flying from all occaſions which may inſnare the believer in Chriſt in treſpaſſes. Fifthly, let the afflicted diſtinguiſh between faith and ſenſe of joy, both are Gods gifts, but the grounds of faith whereupon we are commanded to reſt our ſelves ſhould be reſted on conſtantly, whatſoever diſpenſation of joy or grief we ſhall meet with: and this is our perpetual duty, but ſenſe is at Gods free diſpenſation to give and withdraw and reſtore at his pleaſure, and is a movable benefit, which, the Lord, as his wiſdom ſeeth expedient for our good, doth give and continue, withdraw and reſtore, diminiſh or augment. And therefore the afflicted is bound by duty ſtill to believe and rejoyce in believing: And to have the joy of ſenſe alſo he may lawfully ſtudy, but ought not to ſuffer his faith to be weakened by the want

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of it, as the Prophet doth teach us, *Pſ.* 42. 11. and, 43. 5. and, 88. Laſt of all, let the afflicted be poſed upon his conſcience if he dare condemn his flying to Chriſt in the ſenſe of his ſins as no act of faith, or if he dar deny his hunger after renewed conſolation, and beholding of God with joy as reconciled in Chriſt, to be an act of love to God and of communion with him? Therefore, let him confeſſe with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſ.* 77. 10. *This my doubting is my infirmity, I will remember the years of the right hand of the Lord.*

CHAP. XVI.

Wherein is ſolved the true converts doubt of his regeneration, becauſe he ſeemeth to himſelf not to grow in grace by the uſe of the means appointed for his growth.

SOme true converts are brought to ſuſpect their owtt regeneration, becauſe in the uſing of the means leading to ſanctification and ſalvation, ſundry complain and ſay, I do not perceive the Lords bleſſing on my pains and diligence; I grow not in the knowledge of things ſpiritual; my faith doth not grow by hearing nor reading of the Word of God, nor by meditation of it; I do not prevail in wreſtling againſt my in-bred ſin and corrupt nature, neither by prayer nor faſting: and therefore, what ſhall I judge of my ſtate, but that it is like I am not converted and renewed? For, if I were indeed converted and reconciled with God, I conceive it ſhould fair otherwayes with me then it doth.

2. In this caſe the true convert is in hazard of growing ſlack and careleſs in the uſe of the means, and to grieve the holy Spirit, by preſcribing unto him and limiting of him unto ſuch a meaſure of profiting in the uſe of the means, and making him know how far he had profited and advanced in the courſe of ſanctification. Yea, there is danger, leſt in this caſe the convert not only become cold-riſe in the exerciſes of piety, but alſo turn looſe in his converſation, and follow the allurements

allurements of the world, having ſo far hearkened to the temptation, as to think it in vain that he hath waſhen his hands in innocency, as (*Pſ.* 73.) befell the Prophet.

3. For removing of this doubt, the afflicted hath reaſon to check himſelf for hearkening ſo far unto the temptation, as to joyn with hypocrits in his complaint, *Iſa.* 58. 5. *Wherefore have we faſted* (ſay they) *and thou ſeeſt not? wherefore have we afflicted our ſouls, and thou takeſt no knowledge?*

But becauſe nothing doth more trouble the afflicted then his ſuſpicion of his own hypocriſie, let the cauſes be ſearched from which his ſuſpicion doth ariſe. One of them may be this, that in the uſe of the means, the eyes of the afflicted are more and more opened to perceive the power and poyſon of his natural corruption more clearly then he perceived before. And this deciphering of ſin more and more, doth hinder him to ſee the growth of his light and the growth of his hatred againſt manifeſted ſin, joyned with the overturning of his own high imaginations and native pride. Another cauſe may be this, that the true convert hath promiſed unto himſelf, in the uſe of the means, more and greater benefits ſpiritual from God, then he doth by experience find, which becauſe he doth not find, he thinketh he hath not profited. A third cauſe may be this, that the Lord is about the purging of him from practical errors, ſuch as are the high eſtimation of his own diligence in the uſe of the means, as if there were ſome ſort of merit annexed unto the works preſcribed to the convert by the Lord, or as if the uſe of the means had in them ſome force and efficacy in producing ſuch effects in him as the convert hath expected; or, as if the Lord had obliged himſelf to bleſſe, ſenſibly, diligence in the uſe of the means, to the diligent mans ſatisfaction.

4. Therefore, firſt, let the afflicted continue in his diligence, and bewar of the foreſaid practical errors; let him humble himſelf before Chriſt, that he may draw more vertue out of him by faith, and by ſo much the

more as he findeth ſin in himſelf, and not profiting in the uſe of the means, let him lay the faſter hold on the covenant of grace, and on Chriſt offered therein, for giving righteouſneſſe and ſanctification. Secondly, let him ſet upon the exerciſe of every duty with prayer, that he may follow the duty in Chriſts name with his eye fixed on Gods grace; and after the diſcharge of the duty, let him look to Chriſt, that from him, he may have the bleſſing: for, without Chriſt we can do nothing acceptably, nor with profit. Laſt of all, let him not eſteem lightly of the effects of his diligence, as if he did no wayes profit; but when he hath rightly conſidered maters, if he find the leaſt fruit following his uſing of the means, let him give the glory of it to God in Chriſt the giver thereof, and humbly put up his lamentation for his ſhort-coming in duties unto God by prayer: for, this is the way to make progreſſe in faith and repentance, and humility and ſubmiſſion of his will unto God in the uſe of the means, and let him thank the Lord, that from day to day he is keeped from ſcandalous out-breaking.

CHAP. XVII.

Wherein is ſolved the converts doubt, whether he be regenerat, becauſe he ſeemeth to himſelf to follow religion and righteouſneſſe from the common operation of Gods working by morall ſwaſion, and not from the ſpecial operation and impulſion of the holy Spirit.

THere are ſome true converts, who have profited ſo far in the amendment of their life, and conforming their converſation unto the rule of Gods Word, that the yoke of Chriſt is become eaſie to them, and their delight is to be frequently about the exerciſes of religion and works of righteouſneſſe, and yet ſometime they are troubled with ſuſpicion, whether the work of regeneration in them be ſolid, becauſe any thing they do, may be done, as they conceive, by temporary

porary believers, in whom no ſound renovation of corrupt nature will be found. I find nothing in me (ſaith one) of the effectual motion of the holy Spirit, but all by way of morall ſwaſion, by imitation of others, by education, as may be found in the unrenewed diſciples of morall philoſophy: for as they by frequent actions do acquire habits, wherewith being indued, they diſcharge moral duties more eaſily and with delight; So, I by diſcharging acts of religion, and acquainting my ſelf with them daily, do ſeem to my ſelf to have acquired a facility and delectation in religious actions and works of righteouſneſſe toward my neighbours.

2. This caſe we grant is very perilous, and ſubtilely coloured by Sathan to deceive and weaken the true convert; for, it is true, what power hath been ſeen in morall philoſophy among Pagans, to put a luſter on mens civil converſation, muſt be alſo granted to Theology among profeſſed Chriſtians, becauſe divine threatnings and promiſes, for procuring outward reformation of a mans life, are more apt to prevail with a man, then all morall philoſophy; and it is true alſo, that education by parents, and imitation of good men, is of great force morally to perſwade a man to the following of the outward duties of religion, and to a civil converſation. Wherefore it is no wonder to ſee a true convert doubt of his own regeneration, when he compareth external duties diſcharged by himſelf, with the external duties diſcharged by others whoſe heart he cannot ſee, but muſt judge charitably of them, and yet can neither be clear determinatly to affirm all ſuch to be true converts, nor to affirm himſelf to be a true convert, ſo long as he ſuſpecteth, that as ſome others reformation, So alſo his own reformation, may prove no better then from morall ſwaſion, which may be found in a man unregenerat.

3. For louſing of this doubt and ſtrengthening of the faith of the true convert, let him examine himſelf, whether in the conſcience of his natural ſinfulneſſe, and

ſenſe of his own unworthineſſe and inability to deliver himſelf from the power of ſin, wrath and miſery, he hath fled, and from time to time doth flye to Chriſt according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, to be juſtified, ſanctified and ſaved by him, and doth follow the exerciſes of religion and righteouſneſſe in obedience to the commands of God. If his conſcience anſwer him, that ſo he doth, then, firſt, let him look upon his doubting of his ſtate, as the ſubtile tentation of Sathan; and that he may be ſtrong againſt this tentation, let him renew the acknowledgment of his ſins and ſinfulneſſe, of his weakneſſe and unworthineſſe. and renew alſo his conſent to the covenant of grace in Jeſus Chriſt and his purpoſe to obey the commandments of God in the ſtrength of Chriſt: for, by this means he ſhall gain the entry into his refuge where-from Sathan was drawing him, by furniſhing doubts and weakening his faith. Secondly, having caſten his anchor within the vail, and ſetled his faith on Chriſt Jeſus, let him now maintain his former courſe, ſo far as truth will ſuffer, that his former courſe of life, in following with delight the exerciſe of religion and righteouſneſſe, did proceed from the holy Spirit; and let him conſider, that it is not a ſufficient reaſon to call in queſtion the infuſed habits of ſaving grace, becauſe ſupernatural habits, infuſed immediatly by the Spirit of Chriſt, are entertained, augmented and confirmed by frequent acts and daily exerciſe, no leſſe then natural or morall habits are, which are acquired by exerciſe: And this is clear from Scripture, wherein are many exhortations to put faith, love, repentance, patience, &c. in frequent exerciſe, that theſe gracious habits may grow ſtrong, as the Apoſtle *Peter* doth ſpeak, 2 *Epiſt.* 1. *chap. ver.* 5, 6. &c. Thirdly, let him put a difference in judging of his own converſation and the converſation of others, of whoſe principles and ends of outward godly carriage, he cannot judge, as he can do of his own: for, a man in nature unregenerat, or a temporary believer, may make profeſſion,

feſſion of true religion, and outwardly go on in a blameleſſe converſation, with this opinion, that by his works he ſhall pleaſe God, and procure ſalvation to himſelf. But the true convert ſhall be found a renouncer of confidence in his own works, a man ſenſible of his own ſinfulneſſe and imperfections, who hath fled and reſolveth ſtill to adhere to Chriſt for righteouſneſſe and ſalvation through him; the finding whereof in any meaſure after examination, may ſolve the converts doubt: for, a man in nature, cannot ſo hate ſin and follow holineſſe, as to renounce confidence in his holineſſe, and flve unto Chriſt for righteouſneſſe. Fourthly, let the afflicted convert conſider, that the Lords dealing with his children both by morall motives, and by effectual perſwaſion unto the obedience of faith, may and doth very well concur and agree together, neither is the ſpecial operation of the holy Spirit with any reaſon to be ſuſpected, becauſe he ſweetly leadeth on his child, by way of counſell, (without the childs obſervation of any notable impulſe) making him to overcome ſtrong tentations unto ſin, whereunto he is naturally inclined: for, the more victorious grace is over corruption, the efficacie of the Lords grace is the more conſpicuous, and that obedience is moſt pleaſant to God wherein corrupt nature maketh moſt oppoſition. Therefore in this caſe here preſuppoſed, let him ſtand to the defence of his faith in Chriſt, and go on cheerfully in the way of righteouſneſſe againſt Sathans tentation ſolliciting him to doubting and diſcouragement; which counſell if he follow, he ſhall find by experience, that he hath made uſe of the ſhield of faith, and gotten the victory not without the ſpecial operation and impulſe of the holy Spirit.

CHAP. XVIII.

Wherein is solved the true converts doubt, whether he be regenerat, because he findeth not self-denyal in the measure which is requisite in converts.

SOme true converts are found, who having for a time injoyed peace of conscience, have called their conversion in question by occasion of hearing or reading some sermon of some zealous Preacher pressing the marks of true and sincere conversion, and making self-denyall and loving of God for himself, the main marks of conversion, and without circumspect and wise difference put by him betwixt legall perfection and evangelical sincerity, pressing self-denyal and the loving of God abstractly, further then any Saint doth attain unto in this life. Whereupon some tender souls, do fall in question with themselves, whether they be among the true and sincere converts, because they know that our Lord requireth self-denyall in every person who will follow him, and doth condemn them all for unbelievers who seek glory of men, and not the glory which is of God: And because the Preacher possibly hath made the loving of God for his benefits, to be too too mercenary, and hath pressed without respect to benefits, that God must be loved for himself, therefore the weak convert beginneth to be troubled, as if he were not a true convert at all, saying, what shall I think of my self and of my following of Christ, seing I feel so little of self-denyall in me, seing I have loved Christ for my own good, and many a time in my best actions I have sought the commendation of men in my heart, and I have been ill pleased when I did not obtain it?

2. For solving of this doubt, we grant that every man who will follow Christ, is bound to deny himself: And true it is, there is nothing more difficile then to forsake our own carnall wisdom, and estimation of our

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own worth, works and abilities, how small soever. Neither is there any more dangerous evil, then in the discharge of Christian duties, to seek or accept our own glory and the applause of men: for he that in this point doth foster his natural corruption, certainly doth not in so far favour these things which are Gods, but serveth his own flesh. Therefore, because the reliques of this and all other sin do remain in the regenerat, the Lord by variety of exercises setteth his children daily to learn this lesson over and over for mortifying their corrupt lusts. It is their duty therefore, when any spark of this evil of self-seeking doth appear, to cast themselves down humbly at Christs feet and confesse the sin, lest some spark of wrath break forth upon them from the Lord. For, the end of this exercise, yea, and the reason of the Lords not removing fully in-dwelling sin, is to humble us, and send us to Christ, least if he should otherwayes deal with us, we should grow proud, and not make such use as becometh us of Gods free grace and Christs righteousnesse imputed to the believer; mean time we must not yield to Sathans tentation, coloured with pretense of Scripture, as if Christ had discharged us to seek any good from him to our selves. or to love him for the good which he hath purchased to us, and which he from time to time bestoweth on us: for, when Christ requireth of us to deny our selves, he requireth indeed the renounciation of our own carnall and corrupt lusts, and confidence in our own wisdom, worth and works. But he doth not require of us to renounce the sanctified love of our own well-being, or the seeking our sanctification, consolation and salvation in him alone; for, the love of God and of his glory, is the main end of all our desires; and the seeking that God would glorifie his own grace and truth in his promises to us by sanctifying, comforting and saving us, is a subordinat mean unto Gods glory: yea, the more we seek our righteousnesse, consolation and salvation in God, through Christ, the more we glorifie

God, and do ſay in ſubſtance of God, that he is the fountain of all felicity, and that he is good and faithfull to grant all good things to ſuch as believe in him and do ſeek grace for grace from him.

3. It is true, that we ſhould love God above all things, and love him more then our ſelves, and love him though he ſhould ſlay us; but it is true alſo, that the more we love him for any cauſe, the more we eſteem of him, the more we magnifie and glorifie him; and what is love to, and ſeeking of, God, but the acknowledgement of our own emptineſſe and his all-ſufficiency? and what is our ſeeking communion with him, but a refounding of our ſelves into the fountain whence we have our being, that he may be glorified in our being, and fully well-being? And ſo our ſpiritual love of God for himſelf and for the goodneſſe which is let forth in doing good to us, is not mercenary love, but is the acknowledgment of his perfections and of his grace to us, to whom he will be our God in Chriſt, even all in all to us in him. As for ſeeking of mens applauſe, whenſoever, whether upon receiving of any benefit, or diſcharge of any duty, the corrupt luſt of vain glory doth mix it ſelf (which cannot but obſcure and hinder the ſhining of his glory, which ſhould be aimed at in all things by us) incontinent upon the firſt motion of this our ſinfull corruption perceived, let out ſin be humbly acknowledged and confeſſed unto God, the ſearcher of the heart, and let ſupplication in our ſpirit be made unto him, to pardon our ſin, and mortifie the bitter root of this and all other evils in us.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Wherein is solved the doubt of the true convert, whether he be indeed converted, arising from this, that he knoweth no child of God so hardly exercised as he is.

SOme converts are, who by the light of the Law of God are brought to the acknowledgment of their sin and misery, and by the doctrine of the Gospel are brought to seek their relief in Christ, and have taken on his yoke and submitted themselves to his discipline, and yet fall in question, whether they be converted, because they do find such inequality in their conversation, and such changes in their condition, and variety of tentations, as they can find no example of the like in Scripture; and where it pleaseth them to be free with their Pastor or confident Christian friend, do fall out in questions, if ever they have read in Scripture any like unto them, in such and such particulars as they please to condescend upon; and if their Pastor or Christian friend shall give them some example in the Scripture, of Gods children so exercised, they are ready to find such differences between the case of the godly in Scripture, and their case, as they cannot receive satisfaction. And if possibly it be told them, that their case is not singular, but such as hath befallen sundry of their Christian acquaintance in this present age, yet they cannot receive satisfaction for all this, but still do insist, that their case is not like to any of the godly. Whereupon they foster the suspicion of their not being converted.

2. This ground of judging of mens conversion by the maner of Gods exercising of them, so as other converted Saints have been exercised before them, and of judging the man to be unregenerat, who is otherwayes exercised then they know any convert to have been exercised, did deceive the friends of *Job*, who in *Jobs* face avowed this their error, *Job*, 5. 1. *Call now*, say they, *if their be any that will answer thee, and unto which of*

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the Saints wilt thou turn? that is, name any example of any upright man who hath been dealt with by God as thou art? and what Saint or holy man can thou name, to whom thou can compare thy self and say, such a man hath suffered such things as I do?

This doubt doth arise from this error and mistake; the afflicted doth without ground suppose, that expresse examples of every particular case of the Saints is set down in Scripture. It is true, there are examples of many cases which may befall the godly; but it is not to be expected, that we shall find examples of every particular exercise of mind, wherein the Saints may fall: For as the Evangelist saith, if all particulars were written, the world could not hold or make use thereof. It is sufficient that the Scripture hath set down rules whereunto the Saints should labour to conform themselves, and that it hath opened up the causes and remedies of all spiritual diseases, and hath given so many examples as may clear the rules. It is also a mistake to make the experience of the most exercised souldier a rule for every Saints exercises, or to think that any man can know the variety of cases which befall the Saints: for, there are many whose cases are not revealed to any, but laid open unto God only, by prayer, and are helped by faith in Christ.

3. Wherefore the afflicted must walk by rules set down in Scripture, whether he find the practices thereof in Scripture or not. Now this is the rule, that whatsoever evil condition we fall into, whatsoever tentation, whatsoever pollution hath defiled our consciences, we must humble our selves before God, and flye unto Christ for remission of the guiltinesse, for washing away the filthinesse thereof, for breaking down the power of corruption, and pulling out the roots thereof; withall praising and thanking Christ, who hath discovered unto us these evils and hath made them our affliction, and not suffered them to break forth to the scandal of others. And whatsoever calamity or temporal misery we shall

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fall into, the Scripture hath given order unto us, humbly to submit our selves to Gods dispensation, and to make a good construction of Gods love and wisdom in exercising us so: for, by this rule *Job* did walk, defending his faith in Christ, his living and loving Redeemer, against Sathans temptations, and his friends uncharitable wrangling disputations, when the question was about his state, whether he had ever been converted or not, whether he was a wicked hypocrit or not? and by so doing, he over-came the temptation whereof we are now speaking.

And let not the afflicted lay it for a ground that by his hearing of the exercise of another, like unto his condition, he can be cured: because no example of the exercise of another can be found so quadrant unto his condition, as he could thereby take satisfaction. For, as in comparing of mens faces one with another, (such is the incomprehensible variety of the riches of Gods wisdom in framing them) some difference and dissimilitude will be found betwixt face and face; So, in comparing of the cases of the Saints, none of them can be found in all things so like one to another, but some dissimilitude shall be found between them. Wherefore, the afflicted shall do well, in every condition, to draw near God, and pour out his heart before him at all times: for, God is a refuge for us in all cases, *Ps.* 62. 8.

CHAP. XX.

Wherein is solved the converts doubt, whether he be converted, because he doth not find in himself the infallible marks of regeneration.

SOme true converts sometime are in suspense, doubting whether they be indeed converted, because they do not discern in themselves the unquestionable evidences of their conversion; and albeit they have the undoubted marks of regeneration, to wit, the daily conviction and acknowledgment of their sins, and do live daily

daily by faith unto Jesus Christ, and are endeavouring in some measure of sincerity to bring forth the fruits of new obedience, with respect to all the Commandments concerning love to God and the brethren, yet they dar not defend the sincerity of these evidences, because of the discerned imperfection thereof: for, when they do compare these marks of the new creature with the rule, they find much halting and short-coming therein. In special, they find their sense of sin to be but weak, their faith in Christ to be weak, and their failings and short-comings in the love of God and their neighbours, to be many, So that they scarcely dar allow these begun saving graces, the name of saving graces. And among other defects, they reckon their not feeling of the spirit of Adoption, whereof the Apostle speaketh to the converted Galatians, *Gal.* 4. 6. *Because ye are Sons*, saith he, *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* And, *Ephes.* 1. 13. *In whom after you believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise.* Which Spirit of promise and of adoption, sealing believers, they conceived was known and discerned in the Apostles time by every believers feeling in himself.

2. For solving of this doubt, something is spoken before concerning the imperfect fruits of faith, the buddings and blossoming whereof are not despised by Christ, *Cant.* 2. 13. and, 6. 12. But that this doubt may be more fully answered, let us take up the causes thereof, 1. one cause is or may be this, that the afflicted, albeit, together with the endeavour to lead a blameless life, he be indued with the grace of prayer, and looketh on God as his father; yet he doth not take up this work of God in him, to be the work of the Spirit of Christ, illuminating his mind about duties, framing his will and affections unto new obedience, stirring him up to prayer and helping him in prayer, but in the earnest desire he hath to find the operations of the Spirit in a larger measure of evidence, he doth not mark the present operation, but doth slight it as nothing, or doth not esteem

eſteem of it as becometh, and ſo in his advertance raiſeth and foſtereth doubts in himſelf, which do keep his faith in chains: for removing of which cauſe, let the afflicted obſerve the operation of the Spirit of Chriſt in the meaneſt degree, for the confirmation of his own faith, and comfort and thankſgiving unto God, as narrowly as he doth obſerve in himſelf the firſt motions of ſin and ſtirrings of corruption, for his own humiliation and exerciſe of repentance; for wrong judgment under pretext of humility, doth not pleaſe God. Now it is an act of injuſtice not to give unto God the praiſe of every good thing in a man, eſpecially when the man is found to be caſt down in himſelf, and to be thirſting in his ſoul for a more intimat communion with Chriſt, as is preſuppoſed in this caſe.

3. The ſecond cauſe is or may be this, that the afflicted, albeit he hath had oft times ſweet and ſenſible conſolation, and confirmation of the promiſes of the Goſpel, and hath thereby been put out of doubt of his adoption for the time, yet when new temptations do ariſe (according to what was expedient for the exerciſe of his faith) becauſe the ſame ſweetneſſe is not felt, but heavineſſe for the while, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6, 7. he forgetteth the conſolations he hath had, or ſuffereth them to be called in queſtion. For removing whereof, whenſoever the afflicted is cut ſhort in the point of ſenſe or ſenſible conſolation, let him then ſtrive to abound in the work of the Lord, and not ſlacken his hand in the exerciſe of religion and of his lawfull calling, and his indeavour to pleaſe God in all things: for, ſeing the covenant of grace imbraced, is a firm and ſolid ground for faith to fix upon, albeit full perſwaſion and victorious conſolation were neither at all, or but very rarely felt in this life; the afflicted (whom we have to ſpeak to here) hath no cauſe to ſtumble, but reaſon to bleſſe God, who hath in any meaſure, at any time, comforted him by the Goſpel: for, that condition which the afflicted wiſheth for, is reſerved unto us in heaven, and

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promiſes, ſuch as are made to the meek and mercifull, *Mat.* 5. which qualified promiſes they look upon as conditional, excluding them (as they conceive) who do not find in themſelves ſuch qualifications: and partly becauſe they are not clear about their right to receive the offer of the Goſpel, becauſe they want, as they conceive, fitneſſe in themſelves to receive the ſame, and thus are they oft-times vexed with doubts whether they be in the ſtate of grace or not.

2. For louſing of this doubt, ſundry things are already ſaid, by the way, in anſwering other doubtfull caſes. But becauſe many do meet with this difficulty, we ſhall ſpeak a little more particularly to the caſe; and, firſt, it is needfull, that the afflicted be confirmed about that which is right in him, that the thing which remaineth and is ready to die, may be ſtrengthened: To this intent we commend the afflicted, that being ſenſible of ſin, and feared for wrath, he hath fled unto Chriſt for refuge; next we commend him, that he hath begun to give new obedience to Gods Law, and doth purpoſe to follow on as he ſhall be enabled; and thirdly, we commend him, that albeit he cannot attain that near conjunction with Chriſt, which he would, yet he neither will, nor dare forſake Chriſt, nor put himſelf out of the number of weak believers in Chriſt, for he hath ſaid in his heart with *Peter*, Joh. 6. 68. *To whom ſhall I go? for Chriſt hath the words of eternal life.* Hitherto all is right, and the afflicted muſt reſolve to cleave cloſe to this foundation, becauſe Chriſt hath ſaid, *Joh.* 6. 37. *Theſe that come unto me I will in no caſe caſt out.*

3. For his doubt ariſing from the nature of the promiſes abſolute, conditional and qualified, looked upon by him as if they were conditional, we anſwer. 1. That theſe qualified promiſes, having ſome mark in them of true believers, are not excluſive of theſe believers who find in themſelves a defect of the qualification, but they are inductive unto all believers, to ſtudy the

the attaining of that qualification, and are corroborative of these believers who find in any sensible measure these qualifications: For example, promises made to the mercifull, to the peace-makers, to the upright in heart, do not exclude these who find themselves short in these graces, and yet are hungry and thristy for righteousnesse, yet are poor and indigent of all good in themselves and daily beggers at the throne of grace for what they want, *Mat.* 5. for, these qualifications, found in a weak believer, are signes and effects of sound faith in them. And we must grant, that of these graces, specified in these qualified promises, some of them are more eminent in some of the Saints, and other some of them more eminently seen and felt in other some of the Saints. And in the same person, one of these qualifications may sometime shine more clearly, and at another time by some tentation, or mistake, be over-clouded, and not shine so clearly as before, yet the qualifications are comfortable to all them who find the same in themselves, and are inductive to make every believer to aime to excell in these graces, and so to confirm their own faith more and more, as (2 *Pet.* 1. 4, 5, 6, 7.) we are exhorted. Again, these qualifications, are signs of a believer already entered in the covenant of grace by faith in Christ, and begun to bring forth good fruits, but they are not the conditions of entering into the covenant; for then none could enter in covenant till first these qualifications in exercise were found in them, and that were to dis-annull the covenant of grace, and to set up a sort of covenant of works; for there is not another condition of entering in the covenant but faith in Christ only, whereby the humbled sinner, renouncing all confidence in any good in himself, or from himself, doth betake himself wholly to the grace offered in Jesus Christ in whom perfect righteousnesse is to be found. Now unto the man who shall believe in Christ, all the promises of the Gospel are made, upon this condition, that he do believe in Jesus Christ; which condition of

presuppose the afflicted should have what he wisheth, consolations alwayes running like a river, where were place for trying, exercising and training of him in his faith? but let him work and wrastle on, and among hands he shall have as much peace as may suffice a pilgrim.

4. The third cause is, or may be this, that the afflicted hath grieved the Spirit of God, either by ascribing his gracious operations to some other cause then grace, or counting his consolations to be but flashes, and like unto delusions; or, that the afflicted by corrupt communication, or grosse offences, hath provoked God to anger, as befell *David*, *Psal.* 51. For removing of this cause, whether the sin of the afflicted hath been more or lesse provoking, let him with *David* (*Psal.* 51.) renew the exercise of repentance and faith in Gods mercy, who only can renew a right spirit in him, or rather restore him to the formerly-felt consolation and joy of his Spirit, and let him walk more warily hereafter, that he provoke not to wrath so mercifull a father.

5. The fourth cause is, or may be this, that the afflicted, albeit he hath consented to the covenant of grace, and hath embraced Christ Jesus offered in the Evangel, yet he doth not set to his seal to the truth of God without an hink, or fear and suspicion of his right to apply the grace offered; in which case so long as he doubts, and doth not rest his sinfull soul on the Word of God, offering grace to every soul sensible of sin, who shall flye to Jesus Christ, what wonder the holy Spirit doth with-hold the sealing of the mans faith? For this is Gods order holden forth, *Ephes.* 1. 13. that a sinner should first fix his faith on Christ offered in the Gospel, and after he hath believed (not before he do believe) wait for the sealing of the holy Spirit.

For removing this cause, 1. let the afflicted acknowledge that his hesitation, doubting and suspicion, is justly chastised of God, because he hath not firmly adhered to the covenant embraced by him, and because he

he hath not given unto God the glory of his truth without a pawn, and yet doth in effect quarrel and complain, that he doth not find these consolations which are given, and but rarely, it may be even to the sound and strong in the faith. 2. Let him for the confirmation of his faith, hereafter consider well, how strong and solid a foundation faith hath to lean unto, even Gods promise and oath given unto all that do flye to Christ for refuge and relief from sin and misery, *Heb.* 6. 17, 18. that the afflicted may with the Psalmist, *Ps.* 56. 10. sing *in God I will praise his Word.* 3. Let the afflicted study to be so fast glewed unto Christ in every condition and case he findeth himself, and go about the exercise of repentance and faith and new obedience in his calling, submitting himself to the will of God in every dispensation: which direction if he shall aime to follow, he shall not want the fruit of his faith, and honest endeavour to please God: for, *Psal.* 97. 11. *Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart*

CHAP. XXI.

Wherein is solved the doubt of the true convert, whether he be indeed converted, because he cannot confidently apply to himself the promises of the Gospel.

THere are some true converts, who albeit for fear of the wrath of God for their sins, are already fled unto Christ, and have hid themselves under the wings of the propitiatory in the shadow of the Almighty Mediator, and are already begun in earnest to give new obedience to the law of God; yet from time to time they fall in fear and trembling suspicion that all be not a sound work of grace in them; and that partly because they cannot confidently apply to themselves the promises of the Gospel, whether absolut, such as are made to the Elect, *Jer.* 31, 31. or conditional, such as are made to believers in Christ offered in the Gospel; or qualified promises,

promiſes, ſuch as are made to the meek and mercifull, *Mat.* 5. which qualified promiſes they look upon as conditional, excluding them (as they conceive) who do not find in themſelves ſuch qualifications: and partly becauſe they are not clear about their right to receive the offer of the Goſpel, becauſe they want, as they conceive, fitneſſe in themſelves to receive the ſame, and thus are they oft-times vexed with doubts whether they be in the ſtate of grace or not.

2. For louſing of this doubt, ſundry things are already ſaid, by the way, in anſwering other doubtfull caſes. But becauſe many do meet with this difficulty, we ſhall ſpeak a little more particularly to the caſe; and, firſt, it is needfull, that the afflicted be confirmed about that which is right in him, that the thing which remaineth and is ready to die, may be ſtrengthened: To this intent we commend the afflicted, that being ſenſible of ſin, and feared for wrath, he hath fled unto Chriſt for refuge; next we commend him, that he hath begun to give new obedience to Gods Law, and doth purpoſe to follow on as he ſhall be enabled; and thirdly, we commend him, that albeit he cannot attain that near conjunction with Chriſt, which he would, yet he neither will, nor dare forſake Chriſt, nor put himſelf out of the number of weak believers in Chriſt, for he hath ſaid in his heart with *Peter*, Joh. 6. 68. *To whom ſhall I go? for Chriſt hath the words of eternal life.* Hitherto all is right, and the afflicted muſt reſolve to cleave cloſe to this foundation, becauſe Chriſt hath ſaid, *Joh.* 6. 37. *Theſe that come unto me I will in no caſe caſt out.*

3. For his doubt ariſing from the nature of the promiſes abſolute, conditional and qualified, looked upon by him as if they were conditional, we anſwer. 1. That theſe qualified promiſes, having ſome mark in them of true believers, are not excluſive of theſe believers who find in themſelves a defect of the qualification, but they are inductive unto all believers, to ſtudy the

the attaining of that qualification, and are corroborative of these believers who find in any sensible measure these qualifications: For example, promises made to the mercifull, to the peace-makers, to the upright in heart, do not exclude these who find themselves short in these graces, and yet are hungry and thristy for righteousnesse, yet are poor and indigent of all good in themselves and daily beggers at the throne of grace for what they want, *Mat.* 5. for, these qualifications, found in a weak believer, are signes and effects of sound faith in them. And we must grant, that of these graces, specified in these qualified promises, some of them are more eminent in some of the Saints, and other some of them more eminently seen and felt in other some of the Saints. And in the same person, one of these qualifications may sometime shine more clearly, and at another time by some tentation, or mistake, be over-clouded, and not shine so clearly as before, yet the qualifications are comfortable to all them who find the same in themselves, and are inductive to make every believer to aime to excell in these graces, and so to confirm their own faith more and more, as (2 *Pet.* 1. 4, 5, 6, 7.) we are exhorted. Again, these qualifications, are signs of a believer already entered in the covenant of grace by faith in Christ, and begun to bring forth good fruits, but they are not the conditions of entering into the covenant; for then none could enter in covenant till first these qualifications in exercise were found in them, and that were to dis-annull the covenant of grace, and to set up a sort of covenant of works; for there is not another condition of entering in the covenant but faith in Christ only, whereby the humbled sinner, renouncing all confidence in any good in himself, or from himself, doth betake himself wholly to the grace offered in Jesus Christ in whom perfect righteousnesse is to be found. Now unto the man who shall believe in Christ, all the promises of the Gospel are made, upon this condition, that he do believe in Jesus Christ; which condition of

faith in Christ, when it is now performed, and by the grace of God, the man made a believer in Christ, then the absolute promises of making a new heart, and of writing the Law of the Lord therein, (*Jer.* 31. 31. and *Ezek.* 11. 19.) and all the promises of saving graces set down in holy Scripture, do all of them belong to the believer in Christ, in whom all the promises are *yea* and *amen*, as if his name were set down.

4. As to his doubt, arising from his weak and infirm application of the promises, let the afflicted consider what God hath already wrought and is a working in him by way of application: for, first, God hath granted to him the use of the meanes with others in the visible Kirk, so that it may be said unto him in this respect, as it is, *Esa.* 5. 4. what could be done in outward means and offer-making of grace which is not done? Secondly, God hath drawn more near unto him, and hath illuminat his mind about his sinfull state in nature, and about the way of delivery by faith in Christ, and yet more, hath inclined his heart to accept of the offer of Christ and make answer to the call, as *David* did: *When thou saidst, seek my face, my soul answered, thy face O Lord will I seek,* Psal. 27. 8. Thus God hath applyed Christ and the promises of the Gospel to the afflicted, and hath made the afflicted to flye unto Christ offered in the Gospel and to apply him unto himself, that hitherto the afflicted hath no reason to complain of not application of Christ and his promises, on Gods part, nor yet of begun-application on the afflicted's part. Where] is the] in-lake then? I answer, the defect is, first, in the afflicted, who hath not duly considered the passages of Gods gracious approaching to him, and drawing of the man to himself in Christ; another defect is, that the afflicted upon groundlesse mistakes, doth not lay claim to Christ and to all the promises of grace for righteousnesse and salvation in him, and that because he is not so clear of his right unto, and interest in, Christ, as he can lay claim confidently unto the same.

5. For

5. For clearing of the afflicted in this his right and warrant, confidently to apply Christ and all the promises of the Gospel, let him consider, first, the dreadfull sentence of the curse and condemnation of all them that do not believe on Christ, *Joh.* 3. 18. *He that believeth in Christ, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the only begotten Son of God.* Secondly, let him consider the largeness of the Gospel, wherein grace is offered to all and every believer, *Joh.* 3. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* He saith *whosoever*, without exception, lest any man who desireth to believe in Christ, should doubt that he shall be received and made welcome. Thirdly, let him meditate upon the wonderfull mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, who, that he might ransom and redeem his people from sin and misery, hath assumed humane nature into the union of person with his divine nature, and given a perpetual pawn and pledge of his hearty willingness to reconcile, justifie, sanctifie and save to the uttermost every one who shall come unto God through him: whereunto his mediatory Office, and cloathing himself with most sweet relations of Prophet, Priest and King to all his followers, doth bear abundant witnesse. Fourthly, let him hearken to the quickening and comfortable invitations which by his Spirit, speaking in Scripture, he uttereth in the ears of all to whom the Gospel cometh with a joyfull sound; *Ho, every one that thirsteth!* Isa. 55. 1. to 10. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy loaden,* Mat. 11. 28. *We are Embassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christs stead, be reconciled to God,* 2 Cor. 5. 20. *And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* Rev. 22. 17. Fifthly, let the afflicted consider what answer he will give to the expresse command of God, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. *This is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus*

Christ and love one another as he hath commanded us. For, this commandment being directed to all the hearers of the Gospel, chargeth every one without exception, first to examine seriously their life by the rule of Gods Law, that thereby they may be convinced of their damnable state in nature, and made to acknowledge their sin and misery, and inability to help themselves: Secondly, having examined and acknowledged their natural lost condition they are commanded to flye to Jesus Christ, that by faith in him they may be delivered. Thirdly, that having fled to Christ, they should evidence their faith by love to Christ or God in Christ, and their neighbours, especially such as are of the household of faith. In which commandment, both the order of applying Law and Gospel, is set down, and the necessity of believing in Christ, upon the warrant of this clear command; so that whosoever is a hearer of the Gospel, and doth not in this order flye unto Christ, he is inexcusable, even the wicked and worst of men. And much lesse excusable is the afflicted convert of whom we are now speaking, who already hath acknowledged his lost condition without Christ, and knoweth that there is no hope of relief, except by faith in Jesus, and hath fled to Christ, and dare not depart from him, if this man shall stand here and not relye on Christ and rest his soul upon him confidently, what excuse can he make? If he do object, that his name is not written in this command, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. it hath no force to impede his faith, for neither is his name written in any of the ten commands of the morall Law, and yet he findeth himself tyed to the obedience of every one of them, and why is he not tyed also to this sweet command of the Gospel of grace, as well as to other commands? this command being given forth as the last declaration of Gods will, for relief of them who acknowledge that they by the law are condemned? wherefore let not the afflicted any more pretend the difficulty of applying Christ and his graces offered in the Gospel,

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CHAP. XXII

Wherein is solved the doubt of the true convert concerning his conversion, arising from the observation in himself of presumption and security in his prosperity and of his misbelief in adversity.

THere are some true converts, who albeit they are neither idle nor unfruitfull in the work of the Lord, and in acknowledging of Christ, yet are frequently called in question about their state in grace; for when their conscience is quiet, they fall in suspicion that their faith is but presumption, and when through tentation in adversity they are put to wrestling, their suspicion is, that then felt weaknesse of faith in wrastling is but misbelief. And when the frequent perturbations of their mind, do make them indisposed for any exercise of religion, a suspicion is raised, that the faith which they seemed to have, is but dead, because when there is most need of bringing forth fruits they are altogether unfit and unable to bring forth any fruits. What shall I think of my estate, saith the afflicted, who when an enemy doth not appear am secure, and when I must enter the combat with the adversary, I faint, and oftimes when I am called to the exercise of religion, I am confounded, I am stupid and impotent to discharge any duty therein?

2. That this doubt may be solved, the three causes of his doubting must be removed. As to the first, which is the suspicion, that his faith is presumption, we do not deny that carnall confidence in prosperity useth to

assume to it self the name of true faith, and that even true converts, do sometime deceive themselves concerning the measure of their faith, both on the right hand and on the left, by judging faith not questioned, to be strong faith, and faith in wrastling to be weak or none at all. We grant also, that some mixture of presumption will be found joyned with true faith, and of misbelief also. Which evils do lurk and hide their power, till the man be put to some tryal. Wherefor the afflicted hath need of discretion, that he may have a right esteem both of the operation of the holy Spirit, and of the power of native corruption in himself, for faith must not be condemned for the imperfections of it, or for the mixture of presumption and misbelief with it. And to help his judgment, let him observe the nature of prevalent presumption, and the nature of true faith, which differ one from another in these four respects, first, presumption is founded upon a false imagination without any warrant of Gods Word; but faith taketh heed to the Scripture, that from the Word it may give a reason of believing. 2. Presumption is negligent and idle in the discharge of duties, but faith taketh head to the commands of God, and is diligent and serious in the use of the means. 3. The presumptuous man doth not make question of his estate, but blesseth himself, when his way is to be hated, for he doth not examine himself, that he may know certainly in what condition he is, but he that puts his faith in exercise, doth carefully examine his carriage and condition, lest he deceive himself. 4. The presumptuous man in all his wayes and actions is well pleased with himself, but the believer, because of the sinfulnesse he findeth in all his actions, is ill pleased with himself in his best actions many times, and renounceth all confidence in his works, that he may wholly depend on the grace of God.

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4. As for his ſuſpicion, that his faith is null, becauſe it proveth weak in conflict, let the afflicted beware leſt he help and ſtrengthen Sathans tentations againſt his faith, albeit he find his faith weak in tryals and aſſaults, and not anſwerable either to his own hope or others expectation of him; yet let him not quench the ſmoaking flax, nor break the bruiſed reed, but let him follow Chriſt, humbling himſelf before God becauſe of his defects, and going about to ſtrengthen that which is remaining. 2. Albeit in ſome fit of tentation he ſlide, as *Peter* did, and find that he hath preſumed too much of his own ſtrength and honeſt purpoſe as *Peter* alſo did, yet let him not think that his faith is null, but let him weep with *Peter*, and turn again by repentance, and watch better over his own heart for time to come.

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fileth the conſcience, are able to hinder the exerciſe of religion, and diſcharge of chriſtian duties at a time, but alſo it is found by experience, that any perturbation of mind, albeit it do not defile or concern the conſcience, may in ſome part hinder the diſcharge of a religious exerciſe, as may be ſeen when any perſon is ſurpriſed with the report of ſome notable damnage, or is poſſibly wounded by ſome accident, or terrified by the ſight of imminent danger; yet for all this, none of theſe things can prove faith to be dead, but doth ſhew the infirmity of a mans mind, the uſe of whoſe reaſon may be hindered for a time by perturbations and ſudain paſſions; and at the moſt, the preſuppoſed caſes may prove the weakneſſe of faith, and the interruption of it in the putting forth it ſelf vigorouſly for the time, but cannot prove the deadneſſe or *nullity* of faith, whih after ſuch paſſions are paſt, doth ſet forward to bring forth fruits in better meaſure: wherefore let not the afflicted halt in his way for ſuch tentations, but let him make ſtraight ſteps to himſelf, leaſt that which is halting be turned out of the way; let him reject theſe fiery darts and tentations tending to weaken his confidence, let him humble himſelf in the ſenſe of inherent corruption, and waſh frequently his conſcience at the fountain, which is opened up in the houſe of *David* for purging away ſin and uncleanneſſe; let him carry himſelf the more circumſpectly in all things, becauſe of his frequent experience of Sathans malice, of the power of ſin, and of his own infirmities.

CHAP. XXIII.

Wherein is ſolved the doubt of a true converts regeneration, ariſing from ſome falſe rule applyed without reaſon to himſelf.

SOme true converts, judging their ſtate by ſome falſe rule, do not only torment themſelves, but alſo (ſo far

far as in them lyeth) by pronouncing falſe ſentences of their own ſtate, go about to extinguiſh the ſpunk of piety which is in them. The falſe rule whereby they do judge themſelves, is ſtrengthened by a groundleſſe perſwaſion, that it is a true and ſure rule, and ordinarily when they think or ſpeak of it, they prefix no reaſon for it, but ſome confident aſſeveration, ſuch as *without doubt, it is moſt certain,* and *I am perſwaded of it,* and ſuch like. If I were regenerat and truly converted, without doubt, I ſhould be in a better diſpoſition then I am, I ſhould love the Lord more fervently, I ſhould underſtand the myſteries of Gods Word more clearly, I ſhould not be ſo little affected with the ſenſe of Gods benefits beſtowed on me, I ſhould not go ſo lightly under the conviction of ſo many ſins againſt God as I feel in me, I ſhould be more diligent in the work of the Lord, in my calling I ſhould walk more humbly and circumſpectly in all my converſation, and ſuch like many expreſſions. The ſame courſe doth the afflicted follow in his examination of the operations of the holy Spirit, and of every Chriſtian vertue in himſelf: without doubt, ſaith he, if this were truly as a Chriſtian vertue in me, there would not be ſuch a diſpoſition as I find in me, my condition ſhould be ſuch and ſuch as became a new creature, which becauſe I do not find in me, I have juſt reaſon to call in queſtion my converſion. And here is a port opened for Sathan to enter at, and to throw all his fiery darts at the miſerable ſoul of the weak convert, whence many complaints do break forth, and thanksgiving for mercies received and for the time injoyed, is broken off and ceaſeth: And partly through diffidence, partly through murmuring, the Spirit of the Lord is provoked to wrath.

2. We grant, that this is a dangerous evil not only to the perſon afflicted, but alſo to ſuch as are familiarly acquainted with his condition, becauſe this diſeaſe readily doth infect others, as it came to paſſe in the camp of *Iſrael*, where the murmuring of ſome, ſet the body

body of the army on a mutiny against God: for, one that is weak in the faith, when he heareth such complaints in the mouth of one whom he judgeth to be holier then himself, incontinent he falleth on complaining of his own state, saying, that he hath more weighty reason to suspect the soundnesse of his conversion, then the person hath whom he hath heard suspecting his being in the state of grace.

3. Wherefore let the afflicted before he shall vent his suspicion of his state, examine the rule whereby he hath passed sentence on himself, whether he can make it good from the Scripture: for, it is not sufficient to say, *without doubt*, and *I am perswaded* it is true, except it can be confirmed by the infallible warrant of Gods Word; and let his friend who shall hear his complaint, expressly require a reason of his confidence, that such a rule is clear from Scripture, and that the application thereof is made righteously. Which if he cannot prove otherwayes then Sathan doth enforce his tentations, that is, either without Scripture, or by abusing Scripture contrary to the intent thereof, let him acknowledge his readinesse to misbelieve and disobey the Word of the Lord, and to hearken to Sathans tentations to the weakening of his own faith, and hindering of his cheerfull obedience to the Lords commands: and because such question-making of being in the state of grace, is oftimes very inconsideratly uttered, even before them who do not allow the complainers misconstruction of his state, or if they should allow it, and say to the complainer, that they believed that suspicion of his state were very just, it should grieve the complainer more then the doubt it self: Therefore let the afflicted neither hearken to the suspicion, nor vent it when it is strongly suggested; but let him humble himself before Christ, because of these defects and wants of such evidences of saving grace as he would have; and in the sense of these wants, let him cleave close to Christ for covering his nakednesse, and earnestly endeavour by faith

faith in Christ to be made more and more conform to the examplar of holineſſe holden forth in the Scripture.

CHAP. XXIV.

Wherein is ſolved the converts doubt of his own converſion, becauſe he hath found the deceitfulneſſe of his own heart and dare not truſt it any more.

SOme ſincere converts, who uprightly do ſerve Chriſt, and adhere unto him by faith, when they conſider the doctrine of the deceitfulneſſe of the heart of man, and how many are deceived by truſting to the teſtimony of their own heart, concerning their regeneration and juſtification, do begin to call in queſtion all the work of their own converſion, and do fear leaſt they be found in the number of the finer ſort of hypocrits, who deceive both themſelves and others, having nothing in them but a civil life and form of religion, without the power of godlineſſe, and do ſleep to death in ſecurity: of which ſort our Lord Jeſus forewarneth, that not only privat perſons, but alſo many preachers ſhall be found, *Mat.* 7. 22. of whom we may ſuppone, that they were not conſcious of open and groſſe wickedneſſe, but were of a blameleſſe carriage before the world, profeſſing the Chriſtian faith, and teaching others to believe in Chriſt, and doubted nothing but Chriſt ſhould judge of them as reall Saints; to whom for all that, Chriſt ſhall one day ſay, *depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you.* It is certain that ſuch men have been deceived by their own heart: which when the afflicted doth conſider, he ſtandeth aſtoniſhed and trembleth for fear, ſaying with himſelf, what ſhall I think of my former opinion of my bleſſed ſtate, I fear my heart hath deceived me, as others of greater gifts and better life, have been deceived by their own heart.

2. This is a doubt which hath need to be ſolved; but neither this nor any other doubt can be ſolidly and effectually

effectually solved by any mean, except the holy Spirit give a blessing to the means: for, it is certain, that there are many, who being religiously educat and free from grosse vices, do not repent of their sins, are not touched with the sense of their original sin and corrupt lusts, but without taking any burden on their consciences for these, do passe by their time, well pleased with their own estate. Some also there are, who having fallen in grosse and scandalous sins, do find for some time remorse of conscience for these grosse sins, but for their other sins beside those, and for their in-born corruptions, are not carefull, thinking it sufficient if thereafter they do not fall in such grosse faults: The first sort of men, do deceive themselves, thinking they have little to repent of, in regard they are free of grosse out-breakings. This last sort deceive themselves also, because they esteem their natural sorrow for such sins as are grosse and scandalous, to be true repentance, albeit they be not humbled for the fountain of these out-breakings, to wit, their in-born corruption of nature and filthy concupiscence, and the daily out-breakings thereof, to the polluting of their spirits, whereof they do take litle or no notice. Many also there are who deceive themselves, esteeming the outward exercises of religion, and some works (in themselves commendable) to be sufficient fruits and evidences of their faith in Christ and of their regeneration, albeit they have not as yet fled to Christ sincerely, neither ever put a right estimation upon the imputed righteousnesse of Christ. Such men, when they should renounce all confidence in their own works, and in the sense of their sinfulnesse flye unto the covenant of grace offered in Christ, that in him they might have remission of sin, and from him by faith draw strength and ability to bring forth good works, they run a contrary course; for in the confidence of their own strength they go about sundry duties toward men, and exercises of religion toward God, trusting in those works, as if by works they were to be justified.

justified. Therefore justly shall Christ say unto them, *depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you.* Such were many of the Israelits, who being ignorant of the righteousnesse of God, went about to establish their own righteousnesse. These things when one, weak in faith doth consider, no wonder he be troubled and be afraid lest he deceive himself and perish as others have done.

3. This is a dangerous disease, and so long as it is not cured, it hinders much the tender beginnings of the new creature, that it cannot come up to manly strength. First therefore, let the afflicted wisely examine the course of his by-gone life, lest he either absolve, or condemn himself, rashly; and let him beware lest he esteem the worse of the evidences of a new creature, and the fruits of faith, because these that look to be justified by their works, can produce the like works. Secondly, let the afflicted call to mind whether in the beginning of the reformation of his life, the Law as a Pedagoge did lead him unto Christ; and whether since that time, the law did daily put him on, and force him to flye to Christ, and to embrace Christ and his righteousnesse, and hath made him to study obedience to the law, out of love to God, so much the more carefully, as he perceived himself obliged thankfully to acknowledge grace granted in Christ to him; for if any measure of the daily exercise of repentance, if any measure of love to Christ, and any measure of endeavour of new obedience, be found after examination in the person afflicted, out of doubt the ground is laid solidly of his salvation, out of doubt he hath an evidence of the work of grace by the operation of the holy Spirit in himself.

4. If in this examination the afflicted be not clear, but the doubt doth yet stick, because of the suspicion he hath of the felt deceitfulnesse of his own heart, we offer unto him this counsell, that he quickly humble himself before God, and do ingenuously acknowledge

the native perverſeneſſe and deceitfulneſſe of his heart; and for that very reaſon, let him embrace Chriſt the Redeemer in the armes of faith, offering himſelf to every condemned ſinner; and let him thank God who hath deciphered unto him this deceitfulneſſe of his heart, and offered Chriſt unto him for the true remedy of this and every other ſinfull malady. And in the mean time, let him put a difference between himſelf and an hypocrit, in whom the deceit of the heart is neither acknowledged nor ſeen, but foſtered and defended: for, a cloſe hypocrite, after hearing of the doctrine of the deceitfulneſſe of the heart, will ſtand to the defending of his own ſincerity, and will take it hardly if any man labour to convince him of any meaſure of hypocriſie: but a true convert, or regenerat perſon, will not deny but much hypocriſie may be found in him; and albeit he be ſorrowfull, that this deceitfulneſſe of heart hath had lodging in him and lurked too long, yet is he willing and glad to have this evil more and more diſcovered unto him, and heartily doth he deliver up this traitor to Chriſt, to be mortified and aboliſhed by his Spirit.

5. But if the afflicted cannot be quiet and ſatisfied, ſtill fearing and ſuſpecting he be found a man unrenewed, and that for the running iſſue of this filthy boyl, opened up to him by the ſword of the Spirit, let him beware that he paſſe not peremptor ſentence againſt himſelf, that he do not conclude himſelf to be a man altogether in the bond of iniquity; but let him ſuſpend for a time, the diſputation, and do that which is allowed unto every ſelf-condemned man in the beginning of his converſion, that is, quickly let him flye unto Chriſt for remiſſion of ſin, let him lay hold on that righteouſneſſe purchaſed by him; and the more he feareth to find God a ſevere judge, let him the more firmly lay hold on Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator, who juſtifieth the ungodly by faith: this is the only ſolid way to perſevere in faith, to overcome Sathan, to ſolve doubts, to reſiſt temptations, and to cure the wound made by Sathans

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fiery darts; for, unto that man, who in the ſenſe of his ſins and ill deſerving, and inability to help himſelf, doth flye unto Chriſt, it ſhall never be ſaid by Chriſt, depart from me, I never knew thee.

6. Now when the perſon afflicted hath of new laid hold on Chriſt and guarded the fortreſſe of faith, and repulſed the tempter, who by all means, and ſpecially by quarreling and queſtioning the by-paſt work of grace in him, had laboured to weaken and overturn his faith for by-gones, and for the preſent alſo, leſt it ſhould convaleſce and grow ſtronger for time to come; now (I ſay) let the afflicted after victory return to the diſpute and to the examination of his ſtate in grace, of his faith in Chriſt and of his regeneration, and he ſhall ſee all the begun ſaving graces which were darkened by temptations clearly appear, and ſhall perceive the ſeveral ſteps and degrees of Gods grace toward him in former times, more evidently then he could diſcern them in the hour of darkneſſe and temptation. And ſo he ſhall return from this battel ſtronger in faith then he was before, and more perſwaded of the work of the holy Spirit in him, then he was before the temptation.

CHAP. XXV.

Wherein is ſolved the doubt of the true converts converſion, ariſing from his breach of the covenant of Grace, as he conceiveth.

THere are ſome ſincere converts, who, albeit they do not doubt but penitents, flying to Chriſt, are received in favour with God, are juſtified from their ſins, and do obtain right unto all the priviledges of the Saints; yet, they doubt whether every ſincere convert ſhall remain in the covenant of Grace, if poſſibly they have ſo far abuſed grace, as to defile themſelves again with the pollutions which they ſeemed to repent of before. And this erroneous opinion of the inſtability of the covenant of grace, they do apply to themſelves; for, when

when they have found by experience, the power of ſin, as it were not only rageing, but in appearance reigning in them, as the conſcience of their relapſing in their old ſins beareth witneſſe. And when they know their nature ſo corrupt and ready to ſin yet more, they doubt if this condition can ſtand with being in the covenant of Grace; and whatſoever they have found of their being in this covenant, they now fear that they be fallen from grace, becauſe they have, as they conceive, broken the covenant of Grace on their part, therefore they apprehend alſo, that God in juſtice, being provoked oftimes by them, hath now at laſt diſſolved the covenant of Grace on his part: for (ſay they) it is no reaſon that God ſhould be tyed unto them in covenant, who ſo many wayes have violated that covenant; but as *Adam*, by ſinning, excluded himſelf from all benefit of the covenant of Works, So is it reaſon, that every one who have violated the covenant of Grace as I have done, ſhould be excluded from the covenant of Graee. And here the afflicted doth ſtand as a miſerable man, uncertain what to do: in which condition, horrible temptations and heavy ſuſpicions of their ſtate do ariſe, namely, that they are in the condition and caſe wherein *Eſau* was, who when he had ſold his birth-right for a meſſe of pottage, found no place for repentance, albeit he ſought the bleſſing with tears. Now what torment may be in the conſcience of the afflicted in this caſe, it is eaſie (for them who at any time have felt the wrath of God) to conjecture. And this doubt doth vex the man moſt, who is conſcious of his often abuſe of the grace of God: for, what ſhall I do, ſaith he? ſhall I defile my ſelf and go and waſh, and again defile my ſelf and go and waſh, and by this means augment my own guiltineſſe from day to day? what is, if this be not, to abuſe the grace of God?

2. That this evil may be removed, we muſt confeſſe that there are many, who after ſome remorſe for ſome ſins, raiſed by a natural and unrenewed conſcience, do

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weep now and then (as *Saul* did for his injuſt perſecution of *David*) and do think, that by their tears they have waſhen away their ſin, and attained to ſome ſort of quietneſſe in their conſcience for a time, who yet do not ceaſe from their wickedneſſe, but remain in their natural ſtate ſtrangers from God and Chriſt. We muſt alſo acknowledge, that ſome of the regenerat in their carnal ſecurity, falling back in their old ſins, ordinarily are ſharply chaſtiſed by God; and indeed no wonder is, that ſuch as have once attained to peace with God, do meet with broken bones, after they have abuſed the grace of God, in giving way to their ſinfull luſts, which was the caſe of *David*, *Pſ.* 51.

3. As for thoſe who fall in open groſſe ſcandalous ſins which defile the whole man, ſoul and body both, it is ſafeſt for them (whether they were before that time converted or not) to let alone long diſputation, whether they were regenerat or not before their fearfull fall, and to ſtir up themſelves to a deep ſearch of the wickedneſſe of their nature, that they may be humbled before God, and in the ſenſe of their in-born ſin and groſſe actual out-breakings, flye unto Chriſt for pardon and grace to bring forth better fruits then they have done.

4. As for theſe who have not fallen in grievous open tranſgreſſions, but in their wreſtling againſt ſin, not obtaining the victory they would, or hoped to have, do find themſelves polluted in their ſpirits, and put to the worſe in their conflict againſt their ſinfull luſts and paſſions; and that very frequently; and thereupon they apprehend, that either they were never in the ſtate of grace, or if they were in it, that they have abuſed and broken the covenant of grace; To theſe we anſwer, that every tranſgreſſion of the commands, albeit it be a violation of the covenant of works, yet is not a diſſolution of the covenant of grace: for, it is one thing to fail in a duty, which the covenanted party ſhould have done; another thing to break or diſſolve the covenant of grace; for, it is provided in the covenant of grace as a ſpecial

article, that God will forgive the sin of his confederat people, when they confesse their faults, and sue for pardon according to the promise of mercy to the covenanted, *Jer.*31.32; and lest any humble sinner should be discouraged and not receive this solution of his doubt, let him consider the words of the Apostle, *Gal.* 6.1. expressly set down for their comfort, who, having resolved to live holily, justly and temperatly, are overtaken in an offence, and are not purposed to abuse mercy, or turn the grace of God into lasciviousnesse; and, 1 *Joh.* 2.1. *These things I write unto you* (to wit, believers in Christ, carefull to live holily) *that ye sin not; but if any man sin, we have an advocat with the father, Jesus Christ the just one.* And this article of the covenant, for granting daily remission according to the necessity of the Saints, maketh the covenant of grace perpetual, and to be daily made use of, as we are directed in the Lords prayer. And in this doth the covenant of grace differ from the covenant of works, which by any one sin is so violat, as the curse doth follow, till the sinner run in to the covenant of grace in Jesus Christ: And by this doctrine a door is not opened unto sinning, but the door only is closed to keep in the true convert from desperation, and running away from Christ, and to help him out of the mire of discouragement wherein he is fallen, lest he sink in it and despair. Neither is the study of holinesse hindered by this way, or the diligence of the convert slakened in the duties of new obedience and pleasing of God, but only servile fear in the maner of serving God, is taken away, and the obligation of love to God (who is found to be so mercifull) is more strictly tyed upon us: which love (as it is augmented daily by new confirmations of faith, and fresh experiences of his grace to us) doth cast out servile fear, as the Apostle teacheth, 1 *Joh.* 4.18.

As for the afflicted convert, his fear that he be like *Saul*, who though he felt remorse and shame, when all the beholders in his army saw him so confounded by *David's* loyall

loyall carriage toward him, yet did he not repent this ſin at all, nor amend his life at all; there is no ground to ſuſpect himſelf to be like unto him, or to *Eſau* who was ſolicitous only for an earthly bleſſing; and when he could not have the firſt place in his fathers bleſſing, contented himſelf with what portion in the earth he could have beſide. Therefore let the afflicted labour to underſtand well the nature of the covenant of grace and the ſeveral articles thereof; and let him conſider, that there is no advantage to be had by excluding of himſelf from that covenant, but that if he will be ſaved, in every condition he muſt draw near to Chriſt, and lay hold on him for remiſſion of ſin, and freſh furniture of grace for every duty: for, *it is good alwayes to draw near to him, becauſe he will deſtroy all them that depart far from him*, Pſ. 73. 27.

CHAP. XXVI.

Wherein is ſolved the true converts doubt, whether he be regenerat, becauſe he findeth himſelf not only far from the meaſure of holineſſe which he obſerveth to have been in the Saints commended in Scripture; but alſo ſhort of the meaſure which ſome of his acquaintance have attained unto.

SOme true converts are, who in the time wherein they are about to ſtrengthen their faith by all means, do fall in compariſon of themſelves with other converts in the mater of their faith, love, endeavour and attainment of an holy converſation; and finding themſelves very ſhort of that meaſure which not only Saints commended in Scripture have attained unto, but alſo ſhort of what ſundry of their acquaintance have gained and given proof of, ſudainly are overtaken with a ſad ſuſpicion, that they may be found none of the number of true converts: as for example, when they read what *David* ſaith of himſelf in the Pſalmes, and namely in the hundred and nineteen Pſalme,

they ſeem to themſelves ſo unlike the copy he hath caſt unto them, ſo far ſhort of that affection to the Word of God, of that faith, of that diligence, of that ſincerity, of that patience, of that fortitude in afflictions, and delectation in God, which the practice of this ſervant of God doth hold forth, that they are aſhamed to aſſume the name of a viſible Saint, or faithfull ſervant of God. And for the ſame reaſon, do forbear under this exerciſe to apply unto themſelves the precious promiſes made to the faithfull ſervants of God in the Scripture. What am I (ſaith the afflicted) that I ſhould preſume to intrude my ſelf in the number of the Saints? what am I, that I ſhould apply to my ſelf what is promiſed to true converts and ſincere ſervants of God? Were I ſuch a one as this perſon, or that perſon is, I might then, for my conſolation, apply promiſes made unto ſuch Saints; but now I cannot apply their priviledges, except for conviction of my conſcience, that I am juſtly for my unlikeneſſe unto them, ſecluded from the promiſes made unto them, and thoſe that are like unto them.

2. For louſing of this doubt, we muſt acknowledge, that the compariſon of our ſelves with the rule of perfection holden forth in the Scripture, is to be aimed at by all; and the compariſon of our ſelves with the eminent ſervants of God, who have attained a great meaſure of growth in holineſſe, is very profitable if it be prudently managed: For, the firſt compariſon teacheth us what we ſhould endeavour to attain, and the other teacheth us what may be by the grace of God attained unto even in this life.

Again, both theſe compariſons do ſerve to humble us before God, when we perceive our ſelves not only ſhort of perfection, which cannot be fully attained unto in this life, but alſo ſhort of theſe degrees which may be attained, and have been attained by others in this life, we cannot chooſe but think the more meanly of our ſelves, and put down the ſailes of ſelf-eſtimation.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, this sort of comparison is profitable to make us more uprightly renounce all confidence in our own inherent righteousnesse, and flye for refuge to the righteousnesse of Christs obedience and satisfaction imputed unto all that believe in him, according as the example of the Apostle *Paul* who renounced all confidence in his priviledges, performances, sufferings and inherent righteousnesse, counting *them all but dung, that he might win Christ and be found in him, not having his own righteousnesse which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ; the righteousneſse which is of God by faith*, Phil. 3. 8, 9.

3. But this sort of comparison is dangerous and hurtfull, when it tendeth to discouragment, when it maketh us think little of the measure of Gods grace granted unto us, when it makes us heartlesse in the course of obedience, and hopelesse that we shall attain unto the measure whereunto the Saints have attained.

4 Wherefore let the afflicted strengthen the thing which remaineth and is ready to die, *Rev.* 3. 2. let him beware lest he quench the smoaking flax, or break the bruised reed, wherein he hath Christs help to look unto, *Isa.* 42. 3. Again, let the afflicted consider, that there are divers degrees of saving faith, divers degrees of the measure of sanctification and growth in grace; for, some are old men, some young, and strong men, and some babes in Christ, and that the same duties in the same measure, are not to be expected from the tender and weak beginner, which are required of the strong and experimented souldier. 3. Let the afflicted remember, that nothing is given, nor promised, nor done unto the Saints in Scripture or in latter ages for any merit or worthinesse in them, but altogether of free grace: and so much the more should this be remembred, as this doubting of the afflicted, arising from comparison of his condition with the measure of sanctification in others, doth presuppone the contrary, as if God did deal with his children according to the worthinesse

thineſſe of their perſons and merit of their good works, which is a falſe ſuppoſition; for, why doth the afflicted caſt down his courage and weaken his faith and confidence in God, but for this very cauſe, that he counteth himſelf a much more unworthy man, and of leſſe merit before God then thoſe Saints were, or are, with whom he hath compared himſelf? 4. Let the afflicted by ſo much as he doth perceive himſelf more unworthy, and more ſinfull then thoſe Saints with whom he hath compared himſelf, thruſt himſelf the more into the boſome of rich grace; let him ſo much the more lay hold on the imputation of Chriſts righteouſneſſe, and cover his nakedneſſe therewith, and employ Chriſt by faith ſo much the more, that out of his fulneſſe he may receive grace for grace, and be made able by his Spirit to bring forth more abundant fruits, and come up nearer unto conformity with Chriſt, and the examples of renouned Saints. 5. Let the afflicted conſider, that we muſt live by rules ſet down in Scripture, aiming ſincerely at obedience of holy precepts, albeit we have not yet come up unto the practice of the rule in that meaſure, which others have attained unto.

CHAP. XXVII.

Wherein is ſolved the true converts doubt, whether he be in the bleſſed ſtate of grace, becauſe he findeth himſelf frequently in an evil condition.

EXperience teacheth, that ſundry true converts, becauſe they, feeling themſelves oft-times in an ill condition, do call in queſtion their being in the bleſſed ſtate of grace, not conſidering, that the condition of a man, whether in the ſtate of nature unrenewed, or in the ſtate of grace, may be comparatively in better or worſe condition, and yet his ſtate remain the ſame. The multitude of the misbelieving Hebrews, were in an evil condition, at the one ſide of the red Sea, when they repented their coming out of *Egypt*, but

but in a better condition when they did ſing praiſes unto God on the other ſide of the Sea, and yet for their ſtate, ſome were, yea moſt part, ſtill in nature unrenewed: *Moſes* and *Aaron* were in an evil condition when their paſſion offended God at the ſmiteing of the rock; but when they did interceed with God for the people, when wrath was kindled againſt the hoſt, they were in a better condition: and both in the one time and in the other they were in the ſtate of grace, true Saints in Gods eſtimation. This miſtake of the weak in faith, not putting difference between their preſent diſpoſition and their ſtate, maketh them judge of themſelves to be in the ſtate of grace when their condition is good, and to be in the ſtate of nature unrenewed when they feel themſelves in an evil condition: when they obſerve their heart inlarged to run the way of Gods commandments, then they eſteem themſelves truly regenerat, and when they feel themſelves ſluggiſh in the work of the Lord, dull in hearing the Word, ſlow to believe what the Scripture ſpeaketh, when they eſteem their ordinary ſervice to be after a form of godlineſſe, without affection and power, and what ſervice they do, to proceed from fear of wrath, rather then from the new and right principles of a regenerat man, then they queſtion all the works of grace in themſelves. What ſhall I think, ſaith the afflicted, concerning my ſtate in grace, when I find my condition ſo frequently not only ſhort of what it ſhould be, but alſo polluted with divers ſorts of ſins?

2. For anſwer, we muſt grant, that the externall duties of religion, may be diſcharged from fleſhly and corrupt principles; for, many do perform commanded external duties, that they may eſchew the reproach of impiety, or that they may inſinuat themſelves in the good eſtimation and favour of the godly, or for ſome baſe earthly ends for which groſs hypocrits do whatſoever they do in religion.

Like unto theſe are all ſelf-deceiving hypocrits, who go about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſſe, miſkening that righteouſneſſe which is of God by faith, as if God could be obliged to take their performance for a full ſatisfaction for their former ſins, and would look upon their works as meritorious of eternal life; and therefore becauſe men may deceive themſelves, 1. the afflicted ſhall do well to examine himſelf whether he hath renounced all confidence in the fleſh, or his own works, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. and fled unto Chriſt for righteouſneſſe, with ſome meaſure of honeſt endeavouring to worſhip and ſerve God in his ſpirit; which if his conſcience can witneſſe unto him to be his way wherein he is walking, then may he be aſſured that he is a true convert. 2. And albeit it be true that the imperfections of the regenerat man do many times obſcure his ſtate in grace, yet can they not extinguiſh the ſpunk of regeneration begun in him, or prove the work of grace in him not to be at all. 3. We grant that the condition of a true convert at ſometimes may be ſo bad by reaſon of ſinfull diſtemper and fleſhly carriage, that many unrenewed mens converſation ſhall be found far more commendable, then the preſent condition and carriage of the renewed man in his ſinfull condition: In which caſe neither God nor his own conſcience, nor any that feareth God can ſpeak any thing but wrath to him, till he repent and turn to God for mercy in Chriſt; yet the afflicted penitent convert, lamenting his bad condition, is in better caſe then any unrenewed man can be into: for, the very grief and perplexity which he findeth becauſe his condition is ſo oft ill and ſinfull, proveth his good affection toward God, and his earneſt deſire to walk before God unto all well-pleaſing, in all things and at all times.

3. But if the afflicted ſhall inſiſt and object, that the fear of Gods wrath and judgments, ordinarily is a main motive which ſetteth him on to do the duties and ſervice which God requireth of him, and not the love

of

of God, the felt in-lake whereof, doth make him go on halting and heavy in the wayes of God. We answer, that albeit the fear of Gods wrath and judgments looked upon alone, doth not prove regeneration, yet it may well consist with regeneration: because God doth not for nought joyn with his precepts, fearfull threatenings of judgments against those who shall transgresse his commands, that they may be as a spur in his childrens sides to presse them to their duties, and as a bridle to curb and check their vitious inclination unto sin, which lodgeth in all men by nature. And this motive is evident in the experience of the Prophet, *Psal.* 119. 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* 2. It may be that the afflicted, lately converted unto God, be not free as yet from the spirit of bondage, but be keeped in some measure under the bonds of servile fear, God so disposing, for the humbleing, exercising and training of his child lately entered in his holy warfare; in which condition his fear is commendable, when it ariseth from the conscience of his sinfull short-coming in Gods service, and of the prevailing of his corruption against the begun work of renovation. Wherefore, let the afflicted go about the discharge of commanded duties in his christian calling, and particular station wherein God hath placed him, in what condition soever he shall find himself. 2. Let him compare his present condition, which he doth count an ill condition, with the by-gone better conditions whereof he hath had possibly experience frequently; and when he calleth to mind the comforts he hath had, and the inlargement of heart to run in the way of Gods commandment, in hope of a change of his present condition to the better, in hope of finding renewed blinks of the Lords countenance, let him humbly wait on God in the use of the means appointed. till the day-star arise in his heart, praying with the Psalmist, that God would quicken him according to his loving kindnesse. 3. Let him cleave the more closely to the

covenant

covenant of grace and the righteousnesse which is by faith in Jesus Christ, withall giving thanks unto God for the grace bestowed on him, for the giving unto him eye-salve to see his blindnesse, nakednesse and misery, and for making sin odious and grievous unto him in any measure, and for drawing him to Christ to be his refuge in his worst condition.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Wherein is solved the doubt of the true convert concerning his regeneration, because he findeth the power of the body of death in the pollution of the imaginations of his heart, vigorous and powerfull.

THere are some true converts, who albeit they be cleansed from the pollutions that are in the world, and have their conversation blamelesse and without giving scandall unto them they live among, yet frequently are troubled with doubting of their state in grace, because they feel in themselves such a power of in-bred corruption of their hearts, as can hardly consist (as they conceive) with regeneration and saving faith, because, *James, chap. 3. ver. 11.* maketh the question thus, *doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?* &c. unto the end of the Chapter. This doubt the afflicted wrestles with, and saith with himself, what shall I think of my self, whose heart is so polluted, that it casteth forth continually dirt and mire? how shall I reckon my self among the Saints? how shall I intrude my self among the justified, who find so little evidence of the work of sanctification in me? For, faith should purifie the heart from this pollution, whereof I do justly complain.

2. For solving of this doubt, many things are already spoken which serve for the curing of this case, and comforting the afflicted in this condition; but because one and the same doubt, doth diversely present it self now in one shape, then in another, and doth vex the afflicted

afflicted in ſundry wayes, we ſhall anſwer this doubt propoſed as it is ſet down.

Firſt therefore, let the afflicted examine himſelf whether he may with ſome meaſure of honeſty ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſ. 66.* 18. I do not regard iniquity in my heart, I do not ſo delight in ſin, but that ſin is ſtill my affliction and my daily grief. Secondly, let him examine himſelf, whether the power of corruption doth break forth in words and deeds or not, or if it do burſt out in ſome paſſionat fits, whether he doth open the ſluce and give it way, or whether he ſets himſelf to oppoſe the out-breaking of ſin, and is humbled for what doth break forth. Thirdly, let him examine whether he flyeth to Chriſt to waſh him, and help him againſt the power of ſin, or not. If after examination he can in any meaſure of honeſty joyn with the Apoſtle in his lamentation, and recourſe unto Chriſt for delivery, *Rom.* 7. 24, 25. he may be aſſured, he is in the ſtate of grace: For, there is a vaſt difference between a mans being ſold unto ſin by his native corruption captivating him, and a mans ſetting of himſelf unto ſin, as a voluntary ſervant of ſin; for, a renewed man may be in ſundry caſes a captive to ſin, and a fighter againſt ſin; But a man ſelling himſelf to ſin, is a ſlave voluntarily ſuffering ſin to reign in his mortall body.

Let the afflicted therefore comfort himſelf, becauſe in him there is a perpetual conflict between the fleſh and the ſpirit, between his native inclination to ſin, and the new creature, or inclination to holineſſe. Neither let him by miſ-underſtood Scripture formerly cited, vex himſelf; for, his faith is indeed upon the work, and the way of purifying his heart; firſt, becauſe he doth flye to the bloud of Chriſt, which cleanſeth him from all ſin, in reſpect of remiſſion granted. Secondly, there is a conſtant endeavour to be more and more holy, and to draw vertue by faith from Chriſt to bring forth good fruits, well-pleaſing unto God. Thirdly, he is about to mortifie his luſts by the Spirit of Chriſt, and to

purge

purge out the leaven of all filthineſſe of fleſh and ſpirit, albeit he cannot purge it out all at once, or wholly in in this life. And fourthly, becauſe albeit his doubting of his eſtate in grace be not allowable, yet it doth bear witneſſe that the remainder of pollution in him is his grief, affliction and vexation. So alſo that other Scripture, *James*, 3. 11. which ſaith, that out of the ſame fountain proceedeth not ſalt water and ſweet, is not to be underſtood ſo as if no rotten ſpeech could poſſibly proceed out of the mouth of a regenerat man at any time; for *James* doth witneſſe, that in many things we ſin all, in thought, word and deed: But the meaning is, that he that bridleth not his tongue, his religion is vain, and nothing but a preſumptuous boaſting of that wich is not reall and in truth, and that it is inconſiſtent with regeneration, that out of a mans mouth, pretending to bleſſe God, curſing of men who are made after the ſimilitude of God, ſhould flow forth as waters flow forth from a running fountain without controlment.

CHAP. XXIX.

Shewing how to quench the fiery darts of Sathan, and reſiſt his ſinfull ſuggeſtions whether of ſhorter endurance or of longer continuance.

SOmetime on a ſudain Sathan caſteth a fiery dart of tentation unto ſome ſin, as his meſſenger ſeeking to prepare the lodging for him: which tentation he doth ſo furiouſly preſſe, as if he would not be refuſed, or could not be reſiſted; and poſſibly may ſo bear-in his tentation, as the convert may be afraid that Sathan ſhall prevail, finding himſelf, as it were, over-powered and unable to bear out in ſuch a caſe, as the Apoſtle had experience of, 2 *Cor.* 12, 7, 8, 9. who found himſelf, as it were, buffeted and abuſed by the meſſenger of Sathan, and unable of himſelf to reſiſt him. The remedy whereof is, that the afflicted with the Apoſtle

ſtle be humbled in himſelf, in the ſenſe of his in-born ſinfulneſſe and inability to overcome tentations. 2. That he flye to Chriſt the captain of militant ſouldiers, and do pray unto him inſtantly to help to bear out in the conflict, and to be rid of the Tempter. 3. Let him hold faſt the faith of promiſed grace, and wreſtle on ſo long as it ſhall pleaſe God to exerciſe him ſo.

With ſuch a tentation *Job* alſo was exerciſed, which ſo far prevailed as to make carnall and corrupt nature ſpeak for it. The tentation was very fearfull, and no leſſe then ſelf-murther, *Job*, 7. 13, 14, 15. *When I ſay my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint, then thou ſcarreſt me with dreams, and terrifieſt me with night-viſions, ſo that my ſoul chooſeth ſtrangling and death rather then life.* The remedy whereof is, with *Job* to flye to the Redeemer, and fix faith upon him, and to preſent the tentation unto God by prayer and humble lamentation, ſtriving againſt the ſuggeſtion, and never to give over relying on God, as he did.

2. Sometime Sathan when he cannot find inſtruments to charge the convert with hypocriſie, and a courſe of wickedneſſe, as he found in *Jobs* tryall, by his uncharitable friends, he uſeth immediatly to fall a railing againſt the whole courſe of the work of grace in the convert, and charge him falſely with deep guiltineſſe, as calumniators uſe to do in their furious flyting and ſlandering of ſuch as they hate, hoping how falſe and groundleſſe ſoever the calumnies be, that yet ſomething ſhall prove likely and probable, and ſo faſten ſomething upon the innocent. In which caſe, let the afflicted lift up his mind to the Lord, and pray him to rebuke Sathan. 2. Let him humble himſelf in acknowledgment of his natural corruption, and having fled to Chriſt for righteouſneſſe, let him take the ſhield of faith for quenching that dart. 3. Let him as he is inabled contemn theſe deviliſh ſlanders of Sathan, and ſet his mind on ſome better employment then to diſpute with ſo impudent and reſtleſs an adverſary; for we have

other

other buſineſſe to go about, then to take notice of the dogs barking at us: but if it pleaſe God to continue that exerciſe from day to day, let the afflicted in patience ſubmit himſelf to God, and direct his ſpeech and thoughts unto God only, not anſwering directly ſuch a *Shimei* at all. It is not ſafe to direct our ſpeech to Sathan at all, but let us ſay to God, the Lord rebuke Sathan.

3. Sometime Sathan falleth on with ſuggeſtions, blaſphemous againſt God and all the grounds of religion, and fathers all theſe blaſphemies on the afflicted as his proper ſins. In which caſe, let the afflicted be humbled before God, becauſe of original ſin, whereof Sathan maketh uſe, as of ſomething of his own in us. 2. Let him renew the grips of faith on Chriſt the Mediatour in whom the fulneſſe of the Godhead dwelleth, reconciling the elect world to himſelf, not imputing their ſins unto them. 3. Let not the afflicted look upon theſe blaſphemies otherwayes then as Sathans malice againſt God, for ſo they are indeed, and not the ſins of the poor ſoul vexed with ſuch ſuggeſtions. 4. Let the afflicted beware of diſcouragments, miſbelief or weakening of his faith in God, of impatiency and fretting under this ſad exerciſe: for, there is more cauſe of fear from Sathans ſecond ſubtile tentations then from his groſſe ſuggeſtions, whereby at the back of the former groſſe blaſphemies, he goeth about to draw the afflicted to the ſuſpicion of the former work of grace in him, and of Gods love unto him. His wiles in this caſe are much more dangerous then his violence in his furious lyon-like aſſaults: for he may more eaſily get the conſent of the afflicted to ſome fits of misbelief and impatience or ſome other ſins, then to admit or conſent unto any of theſe groſſe blaſphemies ſuggeſted.

4. Sometime when the young and tender convert, is reading or hearing in Sermon, the ſad ſentences of God againſt ſuch and ſuch ſins, which do reign in the wicked, Sathan flyeth on him with a falſe application, ſaying,

ing, *thou art the man*, and doth not a little diſquiet the weak in faith. In which caſe, let the afflicted conſider, that whatſoever is ſpoken in or from Scripture of the maledictions of the law, are ſpoken againſt them that are under the curſe of the law and covenant of works, 1 *Tim.* 1. 8. who have not repented their ſins, nor fled to Chriſt, nor are aiming at reformation of life and ſanctification, but theſe curſes are not ſpoken againſt the righteous, that is to ſay, againſt ſuch as in the ſenſe of their ſinfulneſſe do loath themſelves and are fled to Chriſt for refuge, and have taken on his yoke upon them, already juſtified, and begun to be ſanctified.

5. Sometime Sathan doth abuſe the Scripture and put a wrong ſenſe upon it, that thereby he may wound theſe that are weak in the faith: For example, it is written, *Rom.* 14. 23. *whoſoever doubteth, is damned if he eat.* But thou (ſaith Sathan to the young and weak convert) haſt done many things whereof thou didſt doubt whether they were lawfull or not, yea thou haſt eaten the Supper of the Lord with doubting: therefore thou art damned. Again it is written, 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. *He that eateth* the ſacramental bread of the Lord, *or drinketh* of the cup of the Lord *unworthily, eateth and drinketh his own condemnation*: but thou, ſaith Sathan haſt eaten the bread and drunken the cup of the Lord unworthily, for thou knoweſt thou art very unworthy: therefore thou haſt eaten and drunken thy own condemnation. In this caſe and ſuch other like, let the afflicted convert inquire of the Paſtor, or ſome faithfull Chriſtian better acquaint with Scripture, concerning the ſenſe of the words of Scripture, which ſeem to make againſt him, that the words being well underſtood, the doubt may be diſſolved. As for example, theſe foreſaid abuſed Scriptures, do only declare the ſentence of the law againſt him that doth what he doubteth to be lawfull, but doth not exclude him from mercy upon the acknowledgment of his ſin, and flying to the mercy offered in Chriſt Jeſus. And by eating and drinking unworthily,

worthily, we muſt not underſtand that every one, who finding himſelf unworthy, flyeth to the grace offered and ſealed in the Supper of the Lord, eateth unworthily, for, ſo no man ſhould eat worthily, for all worthy communicants, in the ſenſe of their unworthineſſe, muſt and do flye to free grace offered in Chriſt; but the meaning is, that theſe do eat and drink unworthily, who profane the Sacrament, and put no difference betwixt this holy banquet of the Lord, and a common ſupper; yea and even this ſin of not diſcerning the Lords Body, doth not exclude the man from mercy: for, the Apoſtle, for remedy of this ſin, exhorteth theſe who are guilty to judge themſelves, that ſo they may not be judged by God, who pardoneth the penitent, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. And ſo let the afflicted, for ſtrengthening of his faith, know, that every Scripture which ſpeaketh againſt ſin, doth drive the guilty man unto repentance and faith in Chriſt, without whoſe grace, ſought after and embraced, there is no ſalvation.

6. Sometime Sathan, the adverſary of all converts, doth aſſault the faith of Gods children, when he findeth them under ſome preſent guiltineſſe lately contracted, or under tryall of their faith, as under deſertion and diſconſolation, or ſome miſerable condition, whereof he taketh advantage to ſuggeſt to the child of God, that his faith is but phantaſie, that God neither loveth him, nor can love the like of him. In which caſe, let the afflicted humble himſelf before God, and flye to him in Chriſt offering reconciliation; let him, 1. reſolve firmly to adhere to the covenant of grace offered to ſelf-condemned ſinners through Chriſt. 2. Let him obſerve his preſent condition to be the day of his viſitation, tryal and probation what uſe he will make of Chriſt in his difficulties and ſtraits. 3. Let him in the uſe of Gods worſhip wait for the day-ſtar of divine conſolation promiſed to thoſe that wait on the Lord, *Iſa.* 49. 10. 11, and *Hoſ.* 6. 3. and *Iſa.* 40. 31. And laſt of all (leſt we inſiſt too long in reckoning the innumerable wiles

of

of the crafty ſerpent) let every convert conſider, that there is no time while we dwell in the tabernacle of this body of death, wherein we may be ſecure from Sathans inſinuations and crafty ſuggeſtions, or his more diſcovered and open aſſaults; that there is no buſineſſe we can go about wherein this crafty hunter ſhall not dig a pit or lay a ſnare to intrap us, no affliction nor difficulty, wherein he ſhall not ſtudy to keep us back from making Chriſt our refuge, our helper and deliverer: and that therefore we muſt take heed to obey the warning of the Apoſtle, *Epheſ.* 6. 10, 11, 12, 13. *Finally, my brethren, be ſtrong in the Lord and in the power of his might; put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to ſtand againſt the wiles of the devil*, and ſo forth to the end of the Chapter.

CHAP. XXX.

Wherein are ſome mixed caſes ſpoken of, whereunto the true convert is ſubject, and ſo may fall to doubt of his converſion or intereſt in Chriſt.

THere are, beſide the caſes whereof we have given ſome examples and inſtances, other caſes alſo, which we may call *mixed caſes*, the cauſes whereof are partly natural, partly ſpiritual, wherein the true convert may be afflicted with both bodily and ſpirituall diſtempers; melancholious humors abounding in the body, and Sathan, buſie to ſtir himſelf in theſe diſtempers to the weakning the faith of the convert, may take advantage to vex the child of God.

2. Theſe bodily diſtempers are common both to the unrenewed and to the regenerat: for, God hath not exeemed his children from diſeaſes of the body; for, *the righteous and the wiſe, and their works, are in the hand of God; no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him: all things come alike to all, there is one event,* (or accident which may befall) *to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean;*

to him that ſacrificeth, and to him that ſacrificeth not; as is the good, ſo is the ſinner, and he that ſweareth, as he that feareth an oath, Eccleſ. 9. 1, 2. *Saul* the King of *Iſrael* in his melancholious fit, may (by the inſtigation of an unclean ſpirit, changing himſelf into an angel of light) fall on propheſieing in the midſt of his houſe, while he is about to murther *David*, 1 Sam: 18. 10. and experience hath ſhewed, that ſome lying in groſſe ſins, who while they were themſelves and in their wits, were found very rude and ignorant in maters of religion and things divine; but ſometimes ſudainly falling in a melancholious extaſie and rapture, they could rehearſe a number of paſſages of Scripture, and ſeemed to pray, and to bring a number of arguments in their praying, as if they had been wreſtling with God for mercy, of which Scriptures or words of prayer, they had neither ſenſe nor memory, when they came to themſelves, after the melancholious extaſie was over, which fit laſted ſometimes an hour, ſometimes two or thereby; all which time they neither did hear nor ſee the wittneſſes ſitting by, and beholding the ſpectacle. On the other hand, experience hath ſhewed how far Sathan may abuſe and hath abuſed the phantaſie of ſome holy perſons, in the height of ſharp feavers and frenſies; and what ſpeeches againſt God and their own ſouls, by his inſtigation they have uttered. We have an example in *Job*, who in his hot feaver and painfull boils, like a man diſtracted, cryed out, that God was turned an enemy to him, that he did ſhoot all his arrows againſt him, whereupon in his diſtemper he cryed for death, and curſed the day of his birth moſt bitterly. Of which expreſſions when he is challenged by his uncharitable friends, and judged to be nothing but a wicked hypocrit, he excuſeth himſelf, that when he ſpoke theſe words he was not himſelf, but in a roving diſtemper, *Job*. 6. 26. *Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the ſpeeches of one that is deſperat, which are as wind?*

3. But our purpoſe here is not to diſcourſe of melancholy

lancholy in general, nor what may befall in common to the godly and the wicked in melancholious fits: for this doth require a larger Treatise, and the concurrence both of Physicians and Divines. We purpose only to speak to what the true convert is obnoxious unto; and when we speak of mixed cases, wherein both the distemper of the body and brain do concur with the temptation of Sathan, we do not take notice of any light distemper of body and mind, which suddainly cometh and is soon removed, or which the privat diligence of the child of God, in the use of the means may, and useth to overcome. Neither do we meddle with phrensies and madnesse, which so bereaveth the man of the use of common reason, that he cannot understand or make use of wholsome advice and counsell from the Scripture, or rightly conceive truth when it is told unto him (for in such a case the Physician only is to be called to deal with the diseased, not excluding the prayer of the Pastor and Christian friends for him) But we are to speak concerning more moderat distempers wherein the afflicted may lay forth his tentations, and propound the reasons which seem to fortifie his doubts and to dispute of them & receive reasonable answers to his objections, as they are offered unto him. And in a word, such a condition of the mans mind as maketh him ready to hear and follow the advice, both of the Physician and the Pastor, as his need requireth: Now it is notour, that the imagination of these who are of this midle sort of distemper, doth ordinarily fain to its self sad and terrible things, and being fired with melancholious humours and tentations of Sathan mixed therewith, useth to represent to its self Gods hot displeasure, death, condemnation and hell, as it were, before their eyes; so that it is no wonder, that for the the time they doubt whether they can possibly be in the state of grace. But in special, this seemeth most heavy unto them, that their conscience in the mean time doth write bitter things against them, and double upon them,

the deſerved ſentence of condemnation, caſting up the particular ſins (poſſibly repented of, and pardoned) as meriting rejection from God. And here mainly is the ſtick.

2. In diſcerning and curing ſuch caſes, there is great need of wiſe circumſpection: For, firſt, information muſt be had of the afflicted's condition ſo far as his friends and familiars can furniſh. 2. The cure of his wound muſt be tenderly gone about, as the Chyrurgian uſeth to do, when he is to deal with the aple of a mans eye. 3. Whatſoever ſeem at the firſt, it ſhall be ſafeſt for the comforter of the afflicted, not to ſpeak peremptorily of the mans ſtate or condition, yea, nor to judge within themſelves determinatly about him. 4. But it ſhall be ſafeſt to hear the afflicted patiently, to lay out his own condition more or leſſe confuſedly, in moe or fewer ſpeeches, as he is able to expreſſe it. 5. What is further to be ſearched after, by prudent interrogations, let it be pumped up ſo far as conveniently may be. 6. So ſoon as his condition is clear to the Paſtor, or friend who is about to help him, let the ſpeaker unto him, recollect in few words his condition as he conceiveth it, and take up his doubt in a word as ſhortly as may be, that the afflicted may perceive, that his caſe is well taken up by the Paſtor or Chriſtian friend. For oft-times here is the cure marred, when the afflicted conceiveth that his caſe is not rightly apprehended, or what is ſpoken, is not ſpoken to purpoſe. 7. Whatſoever his caſe ſeem to be, Chriſtian compaſſion muſt be ſhewed to the afflicted, and his affliction eſtimat no leſſe then the afflicted conceiveth of it, but made poſſible for God to cure it. For even our Lord in the reſurrection of *Lazarus*, groaned in his ſpirit, in compaſſion toward the mourning friends, before he gave them the full conſolation. And ſurely, compaſſion doth well become a Phyſician: for, it is an addition to the affliction of the afflicted, when the beholder cometh to him, to think

little

little of his pain. 8. Whether the afflicted ſeem to be a convert or not, let him be exhorted by his preſent exerciſe to humble himſelf before God, and confeſſe his original and actual ſins to God, and flye to the grace of reconciliation, and remiſſion of ſins and conſolation holden forth in the Goſpel to every ſelf-condemned ſinner, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; for, Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſſe; when the conſcience is burdened, and the rod is heavy, the curſe of the law, and the rod of correction do drive the man to flye unto Chriſt and take his yoke upon him: And this courſe is wholſome and ſafe whatſoever be the afflicted mans eſtate, whether he be converted or not.

5. And as for that ſpeciall ſtratageme of Sathan, whereby he beareth in the ſentence of condemnation on the afflicted, and fireth his phantaſie with the continual ingemination, and inculcating of this fiery dart, crying over and over again blaſphemous words, charging the afflicted with the ſin thereof, and pronouncing ſentence againſt him, ſaying, thou art condemned, thou art a reprobat, and ſuch like; the afflicted man muſt be informed, 1. that ſuch peremptory ſentences are not from the Lords Spirit, ſpeaking in the Scripture, but from the falſe accuſer of the brethren; for, God pronounceth not condemnation, but remiſſion of ſin to every one that flyeth to Chriſt. 2. That he muſt put difference betwixt Sathans part in the ſinfull ſuggeſtions and his own part in rejecting of them, abhorring them and grieving for them. 3. That he muſt put a great difference between his imagination (or phantaſie) and his conſcience, between the voice ſounding in his phantaſie, whether he will or not, and the ſentence of his well informed conſcience approving, or diſallowing what is offered unto it to be choſen or refuſed, conſented unto, or diſ-aſſented from, by the conſcience judging according to the rule of Gods Word: for, a ſentence of words may be ſuggeſted to the phantaſie, repeated and obtruded upon the phantaſie a thouſand

times, which the conſcience may and ſhould refuſe, and reject a thouſand times. We know by experience, that a ſentence of words may, by oft repeating in the ears of a parret and other birds, take ſuch an impreſſion on the phantaſie of the bird, that it ſhall repeat vocally the words one by one and pronounce them diſtinctly, as if that ſentence had been the work of its own invention: So alſo we ſee, that by frequent repetition of any whiſtle or ſong, the phantaſie of ſome birds may be ſo beaten and informed, that they ſhall chant the ſame ſong over and over again, and make it as if it were its own. Now phantaſie and imagination being a thing common to man and beaſt, it is certain, that the phantaſie of a man, may be wrought upon, and ſtamped with the like impreſſion. And this much, as experience teacheth us, doth befall men: for when a certain ſong or toon is ſung in our audience, and is often repeated, our phantaſie before we be aware, uſeth to repeat the ſame ſong or toon, or quietly whiſper the notes and meaſure of the ſong or toon: And after our judgment hath obſerved this work of the imagination, we can hardly ſtay our imagination or phantaſie, while we are about other ſerious thoughts from its ſecret ſowthing of the meaſures and notes of the ſong: for, phantaſie will not be ruled by the laws of reaſon, more then the outward ſenſe of ſeeing can be hindered from obſervation of what it ſeeth, whether pleaſant or diſpleaſant. What wonder is it then, that Sathan who hath great influence on mens imagination, doth make ſo deep impreſſion on it by continual iteration, that the afflicted ſeems to himſelf to own thoſe blaſphemous ſuggeſtions as his own thoughts, and as the voice of his conſcience, and yet they are indeed nothing but Sathans whiſtling, and falſe ſentences preſſed on the mans imagination? And put the caſe, that his deluded mind ſhould take them for the juſtly deſerved ſentences of the conſcience, yet are they only the voice of the conſcience ill informed, not judging of the mater

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according to the rule of Gods Word, which doth not impute Sathans ſuggeſtions to the ſoul afflicted by them, and mourning for them. And ſo much for ſolving of the doubts of the true convert concerning his ſtate in grace and regeneration.

THE

THE THIRD BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Concerning some premises.

WE have handled some examples of those cases of the conscience of a regenerat man, wherein his state whether he be converted or not, is brought in question. Now, follow some examples of those cases which concern his condition. In which cases, albeit the state of the convert, be not at the first brought in question, yet his conscience may be deceived, and miscarry for a time to his detriment. Of which cases that we may speak the more clearly, some considerations must be premised and taken along with us.

1. A mans state and his condition sometime are taken in a larger sense indifferently for the same thing, as when we say that all the regenerat are in a blessed state or good condition, and that all the unregenerat are in a miserable state or in an evil condition: But when we put difference betwixt these two in a more strict sense, a mans state is that relation of his person wherein he standeth either as a child in grace, or as a child of wrath. In which sense every convert is said to be in the state of grace: and every unregenerat person is said to be in the state of wrath, judicially declared such in Scripture. But

But the condition of a man is his preſent morall diſpoſition in order to his exerciſing of vertue or vice, better or worſe. In which ſenſe the renewed man, or true convert, is ſaid to be in a good condition, when he is going about the duties of religion and righteouſneſſe, as becometh a renewed man; and ſaid to be in an ill condition when he is otherwayes diſpoſed, and exerciſed for the preſent. And in this ſenſe an unrenewed man, is ſaid to be in a better or worſe condition for the preſent, in compariſon with other unrenewed men, or with himſelf at another time. In which ſenſe, *Mark*, 12. 34. Chriſt ſpeaking to the Scribe who anſwered him in all things diſcreetly, ſaith, *thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven*. The condition for the preſent of this Scribe, was better then his fellows, and better then his own at another time, and yet his perſon was in the ſtate of wrath, becauſe he was not entered in the ſtate of grace, or in the kingdom of heaven, howſoever he was not far from it. In this more ſtrict ſenſe the judicial ſtate of the mans perſon is fixed ſo long as the judicial ſentence of the Judge (binding the unconverted to the curſe that is pronounced in the Law, or in the Goſpel louſing the converted from the curſe) doth ſtand.

But the morall diſpoſition and the condition of the man, whether in the ſtate of grace or nature, is variable and changeable to the better or worſe, in compariſon with others, or himſelf at another time. Whence it is, that one and the ſame perſon may be in a better or worſe condition, his ſtate remaining the ſame, to wit, good, if he be renewed, and evil if he be ſtill in nature unrenewed.

2. But here we are about the condition of the renewed man only, which may be better at one time, and worſe at another time, as his diſpoſition and carriage, in order to the duties of religion and righteouſneſſe, falleth out to be better or worſe, according as his actions and behaviour are more or leſſe conform to the reveal-

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ed will of God, and as his conſcience doth its duty more or leſſe commendably. Sometimes his conſcience upon good grounds ſpeaketh good to him, while he ſtudieth to walk before God unto all well-pleaſing, and then he may ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſ.* 26. 12. *My foot ſtandeth in an even place, in the congregation will I bleſſe the Lord.*

To this good condition we need not ſay much, becauſe there is no preſent diſeaſe which calleth for cure of this caſe. Only it is for the child of God in this caſe neceſſary to obſerve dyet and exerciſe to maintain his good condition, and to watch over his heart and wayes, that he may continue and go on therein. All that we have to deal with, is the ill condition of the true convert, when his conſcience doth deceive him, or doth not diſcharge its duty: for, in this caſe only remedy and cure is called for.

3. As that condition wherein the convert is beſt pleaſed with himſelf, is not alwayes the beſt; So neither is that condition wherewith he is worſt pleaſed, alwayes the worſt: But that is the beſt condition, wherein the holy Spirit doth moſt bear down the power of ſin, and advance the work of ſanctification of the man; and that condition is the worſt, wherein ſin moſt prevaileth. And as the goodneſſe of a mans condition, is is not to be eſtimat by any eventual accident, but by its own nature and proper effects. So the illneſſe of a mans condition, is not to be eſtimat by any eventual accident, but by its own nature and proper effects, as God in the Scripture giveth grounds of judgment of a good or ill condition: for otherwayes, by the default of the renewed man, the beſt condition may degenerat in a very ill condition. As when a man doth abuſe divine conſolations, and after receiving of the renewed earneſt of the inheritance, from the holy Spirit, groweth carnally ſecure, and negligent in his duties, or when after ſome groſſe pollution of himſelf in body or ſoul, having grieved the holy Spirit, he doth not humble

humble himſelf as became him, but by Sathans ſuggeſtion of wicked thoughts againſt God and his former work in him, doth fall in ſuſpicion of all former gracious operations of the holy Spirit in him, and miſ-calleth all theſe former experiences; and in his tentation eſteemeth and nameth them, among Sathans deluſions, or elſe at leaſt ſuſpecteth and feareth they ſhall prove no better then ſuch. On the other hand, the worſt conditions of the renewed man, by the wiſdom, mercy and power of God may be turned to advantage in order to Gods glory, and the renewed mans ſalvation, as the experience of the Pſalmiſt doth ſhew us, *Pſal.* 116, 3, 4. &c.

4. An evil condition is ſo called, either, 1. in reſpect of the evil which the convert not only feeleth really, but laments it ſeriouſly; or, 2. in reſpect of the converts eſtimation only, who laments his good condition without cauſe; or, 3. in reſpect of a reall evil, which the convert lamenteth not at all, but lyeth under it ſecurely. Of the firſt ſort is the condition of the convert when he ſeeth his own blindneſſe, nakedneſſe and miſery, the hardneſſe of his own heart and the deceitfulneſſe of it, and doth flye for remedy thereof to Chriſt the true Phyſician, to cover and cure all his diſeaſes. This condition is evil only in reſpect of felt evil, but in reſpect of the converts making the right uſe of the diſcovery of theſe evils, and flying unto Chriſt for relief therefrom; it is a good conditon, becauſe the diſeaſed convert carryeth himſelf well and wiſely in this exerciſe. Of the ſecond ſort is the converts condition, when his faith is put to tryall by manifold afflictions and tentations, and he conceives himſelf to be in a very evil condition: wherein he ought not to afflict himſelf, but to judge this condition to be a good condition, according to the Apoſtles exhortation, *Jam.* 1. 2, 3. *My brethren, count it all joy, when ye fall in divers tentations, knowing that the tryall of your faith worketh patience.* Of the third ſort is the condition of the convert

vert, who when (for example) he feels himself unapt and unable to pray, or praise or discharge any duty heartily, doth not trouble himself with this his ill case, but either layeth-by the doing of the duty, or doth the work negligently and perfunctoriously, and pleaseth himself in so doing for a time. This condition is evil indeed, both in respect of his spiritual diseases, and of his sinfull slighting the duty of seeking relief thereof.

5. For rectifying the judgment of the conscience in any or all of those conditions, first, let difference be put between the *sinfull diseases* and distempers of our spirit (which are evil indeed) and the discovery thereof unto us, which is a benefit in it self, and a gift of eye-salve bestowed by Christ upon us, and *the right use* of that discovery by flying unto Christ, which is yet a greater blessing, even the work of God drawing us to the Saviour of souls the remedy of every evil. Secondly, let difference be put between *tentation*, or tryal of faith, and *yielding* to tentation under affliction. The observation of tentation offered to make us depart from the truth in tryal, is a mater of joy, but yielding is a sin, and mater of sorrow indeed. Thirdly, let difference be put between *grief of mind*, or heavinesse in affliction, and *anguish of conscience* for sin committed: For, a man may have a grieved mind, and a quiet conscience at one time. Fourthly, let difference be put between our *sinfull sicknesse* of indisposition to spiritual duties, for which we should be humbled, and Gods *dispensation* for the time, partly chastiseing us with a lesse and more sparing measure of ability for these duties, and partly teaching us thereby to make better use of Christs offices for pardon of sin, for helping and healing our infirmities, then we have made. Fifthly, let difference be put between *Gods* part and *Sathans*, the *worlds* and *corrupt natures* part, and the part *of the new creature*. Gods part is ever wise, holy, just and gracious, tending to bring his children unto a good and better

better condition; Sathan, the worlds and the fleſh or corrupt natures part, is to procure and hold on, and make worſe an evil condition; and the part of the new creature, is variable, as it falls forth in the battel againſt the fleſh, which luſts againſt the ſpirit, and it againſt the fleſh, ſo that neither of them have the victory alwayes, till the warfare be ended and grace be crowned with glory, for and through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Theſe differences being obſerved, the conſcience may diſcern between a good or evil condition ſo much the better.

6. One and the ſame convert may obſerve in himſelf, if not all, yet the viciſſitude of the moſt notable changes of a ſpiritual condition, as may be ſeen in ſome, eſpecially of his Miniſters, of whoſe exerciſes he is to make uſe for the conſolation of his afflicted people; which Miniſters may ſay with the Apoſtle, 2 Cor. 1. 6. *Whether we be afflicted, it is for your conſolation and ſalvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the ſame ſufferings, which we alſo ſuffer; or, whether we be comforted, it is for your conſolation and ſalvation.*

7. Sundry converts may be diverſely diſpoſed and exerciſed about the ſame evil or ſpiritual diſeaſe: for one, under the obſervation of his evil caſe, may wreſtle againſt it, and not call his own bleſſed ſtate in queſtion; another, under the ſame diſeaſe, may fall in queſtion and doubt, whether he who is in ſuch a condition, may be a true convert or not, and his perſon in the ſtate of grace or not; yea one and the ſame convert, in the beginning of his ill condition, while he firſt entereth in conflict with his evil condition, may for a time look upon himſelf as a true convert, notwithſtanding of his preſent ill condition; but afterward when he findeth his evil condition to remain, and not likely to be removed, he may fall in doubt about the *ſtate* of his perſon, whether he be a true convert or not. In which caſe let him make uſe as is ſaid in the former Book.

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8. The variety of changes of the conditions of the true convert, ariſeth from the variety of the cauſes thereof. As for example, 1. ſometime in the warfare between the fleſh and the ſpirit, the new creature prevaileth, ſometime corrupt nature: and both of them prevail ſometime more, ſometime leſſe, whence viciſſitude of changes of condition cannot but follow. 2. Sometime Sathans temptations, ſetting on in his aſſaults more or leſſe furiouſly, or more or leſſe ſubtilly, do make diverſity of conditions, as Sathan is more or leſſe wiſely reſiſted. 3. Sometime the Lord hideth his countenance from his child more or leſſe, ſometime in adverſity, ſometime in outward proſperity, as his wiſdom findeth it meet for the welfare of his beloved children.

9. Sometime the conſcience doth diſcern an evil condition, and doth give forth a right ſentence about it. In which caſe, let uſe be made of the ordinar remedy of ſin and miſery. As, 1. let the afflicted ſearch into the cauſes which have procured his evil condition, as the Lord after prayer ſhall furniſh light. 2. Let him acknowledge his ſin and ill deſerving, and the Lords holy, wiſe and righteous diſpenſation. 3. Let him grow in humiliation, and in diffidence of his own wiſdom, ability and righteouſneſſe. 4. Let him renew the exerciſe of his faith in Chriſt for pardon of ſin, for mortifying the roots of it, and for letting forth his helping hand for ability to make him watch over his own heart and wayes, and to bring forth good fruits.

10. When the converts conſcience faileth in right judging of its own ill condition, 1, it either taketh an ill condition to be good, (and in this caſe it is ſilent and ſaith nothing, but lyeth ſecure and well pleaſed without cauſe) or, 2. it judgeth a good condition to be altogether bad, or at leaſt not ſo good as it is indeed; or, 3. it doth not diſtinguiſh a good or ill condition ſimply, from a condition partly good and partly evil; or, 4. it ſtands in doubt what to judge of the mans conditi on, being uncertain what to pronounce of it till light

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diſpell the miſt and confuſion wherein it lyeth for the time. Let us inſtance ſome caſes and examples in every one of theſe four kinds.

CHAP. II.

Wherein is handled, the caſe of ſuch as are fallen from their firſt love, and are well pleaſed in this caſe.

The firſt rank ſhall be of ſome caſes, wherein the conſcience of the convert is deceived, by judging the mans evil condition to be good enough.

IT cometh to paſſe ſundry times, that the renewed man ſeemeth both to himſelf and others alſo, to go on in bringing forth external fruits of new obedience, when in the mean time his love to Chriſt is much abated and cooled toward him, in compariſon of the fervency which in his firſt converſion he had: whence it cometh to paſſe, that his works in his calling are diſcharged without that eye and affection toward Chriſt, which ſometime he carried toward him; for, in the beginning of his converſion, when remiſſion of ſins, reconciliation with God, and the bleſſed change made in his ſtate through Chriſt, was green and freſh in his preſent ſenſe, how dear Chriſt was unto him, cannot be expreſſed; but this fervor oft-times doth cool, when his wonted eſtimation of Chriſt is not entertained, as appeareth in the Galatians, who at their converſion were carried with ſuch a meaſure of love toward Chriſt, that if it had been poſſible, they would have plucked out their own eyes and given them to the Apoſtle *Paul* for Chriſts cauſe, *Gal.* 4. 15. and yet this love did ſoon cool, both toward Chriſt and the Apoſtle. It cometh to paſſe alſo oft-times, that the renewed man, contenting himſelf with the ſeal of the holy Spirit, and the conſolation which once he felt, reſolveth to go on in the diſcharge of Chriſtian duties in his calling, and either doth not obſerve this cooling of his love to Chriſt, or layeth it not to heart, but pleaſeth himſelf, in this condition, as ſufficient

cient to carry a converted man to heaven. And ſo uſually three faults do concur in this ſickneſſe. The firſt is a notable defection from aiming at the meaſure felt in his firſt love at his converſion: for we ſpeak not here of daily diſtempers which the convert doth mark and mourn for, and is about to have healed by bringing his wounds unto Chriſt to be cured in the exerciſe of faith and repentance daily. The ſecond is the not obſerving of this decay of love, or the mans ignorance of his duty to entertain communion with Chriſt in the ſenſe of his daily ſins, wants and wounds; for the removing and curing whereof, Chriſt is to be loved daily no leſſe then at the man his firſt converſion.

The third is, the mans being well pleaſed with this condition ſo long as his converſation is blameleſſe, whereof we have an inſtance in the condition of the Epheſians, *Rev.* 2. whoſe labour in the work of the Lord, zeal againſt hypocrits, patience in troubles for Chriſts cauſe is commended by Chriſt. But he reproveth them, firſt, becauſe they had left their firſt love, and did not only come ſhort of the meaſure of their firſt love, but did not lay to heart this ſin, did not repent it, or take courſe to have that meaſure recovered; *thou haſt left*, or laid down, *thy firſt love*, that is, 1. thou haſt remitted and come ſhort of that meaſure of love which formerly thou had. 2. Thou haſt not been diſpleaſed with thy ſelf in this thy defection. 3. Thou haſt laid aſide the care of recovering the meaſure of thy former love. This condition is very dangerous, as is manifeſt in the experience of the Galatians, who falling from their firſt love, did caſt themſelves open to ſuperſtitions and errours, and in danger to be cut off from Chriſt, by their defection from the faith of the Goſpel once received. The reaſons for which we ſay this defection in love is dangerous, are three; the firſt is this, the greateſt meaſure of love to Chriſt and rejoycing in him is leſſe then his excellency and merit at our hands doth deſerve. If therefore we ſhall ſlide from our duty in aiming to hold

hold up this measure of love to him, which we have once attained and cease to grow therein, (because his new mercies are daily letten forth upon us from day to day) in effect, we judge our first love hath been too too vehement, and so Christ is lightly esteemed of, as if he were not still to be loved withall our mind, heart and strength. The next reason is this, when love to Christ, to his Ordinances and sanctified ones, beginneth to relent and cool, incontinent the external exercises of religion and righteousnesse begin to fall short of this principle of love, and to go on more and more slowly, and so peece and peece to decay: for, as when a tree is smitten in the root, it may retain for a time green leaves, but after a time it withers, and neither beareth ripe fruits nor leaves: So also in the exercise of piety and righteousnesse, if love toward God our Redeemer, and delectation in his service and obedience inwardly be diminished, it may readily come to passe, that the very outward works, yea and the profession of duties due to Christ, be taken away also: and this is the judgment wherewith Christ doth threaten *Ephesus, I will come upon thee, and remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent*, Rev. 2. 5. The third reason is, because Christ, who is altogether lovely and love it self, the very Son of the Fathers love, is a jealous God, and cannot long indure not to be met with love from them to whom he hath manifested his love. Therefore he doth make hast to correct this slighting of his love, and to manifest his wrath against these that lye still well pleased with themselves under this condition, *I will come unto thee quickly* (saith he) *and remove thy candlestick*, Rev. 2. 5.

2. That the conscience of the true convert, who is lying in this condition, or is declining from his former measure of love, may discharge its duty more easily and solidly, it is needfull that the man, being convinced of his fault, first consider, how reasonable it is that he should return to his first love, or formerly felt measure of it:

for, the forgiveneſſe of his manifold ſins, wherein he lay before his converſion, for the tranſlating of him from darkneſſe to the glorious light of Chriſts Kingdom, ſhould never be forgotten; the proof which he hath gotten by his converſion, that Chriſt hath loved him and given himſelf for him, ſhould be alwayes called to minde with hearty affection; the great need of Chriſt wherein he ſtandeth for renewed pardon of ſins, for furniſhing him with his Spirit to mortifie the deeds of the fleſh, and to bring forth more ripe and abundant fruits of new obedience, ſhould bind him to abide and grow in his love. Secondly, let him conſider how uſefull and profitable unto us, is freſh, green and growing love unto him; for, love to him, makes us frequently to think of him, frequently with delight to ſpeak of him, to ſeek after more and more near-communion with him, to have our converſation with him in heaven, where he ſits at the right hand of the Father, and to live in heaven, where our love is, more then where we ſojourn in this world. Love makes us love what he loveth, and hate what he hateth; love ſharpens our deſires after God in Chriſt, kindles and inlarges our affection toward him, as the beginning of the 63. *Pſalm* doth make evident. And if the Lord ſhall ſeem to with-draw himſelf, love makes the true convert follow hard after him, *Pſ.* 63. 8. Love makes bold to encounter all difficulties and troubles which may meet us in the courſe of following after him; much water cannot quench love; in Gods ſervice, love keeps a man unwearied, ſtrong and ſtout againſt his enemies, in ſuffering patient, in profeſſion ſincere, in purſuing duties conſtant, in all conditions ſubmiſſive, and after evidencing of his affection with the Pſalmiſt, (*Pſ.* 116. 12.) to ſay with the ſame Pſalmiſt, *What ſhall I render to the Lord for all his benefits toward me?* Pſ. 116. 12. Thirdly, let the convert who is begun to cool in his love to Chriſt, call to remembrance what a felicity he felt when he entertained love to Chriſt, when the loving kindneſſe of

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the Lord was better to him then his life, and sin was more formidable then death, when Gods Commandments were not grievous but the joy of his heart, when Gods Word seasoned and sanctified his bitterest afflictions. Fourthly, let him consider at what a losse he is of many spiritual comforts, whereof he hath deprived himself, and in how many sins (of omission at least) he hath fallen, since his declining from his first love, and what miseries he hath drawn upon his own spirit at least, if not also temporal chastisements joyned therewith: and after comparison of his condition when his love was fervent, with his present condition since his fall from his sometime-measure of love, let him humble himself before Christ and flye in unto his rich grace, as a true penitent, and let the fear of wrath, in case he set not himself to recover what he hath lost, hold him up to his duty; for, this is the remedy which Christ himself doth prescribe, *Rev.* 2. 5. 7.

CHAP. III.

Concerning the converts sinfull conniving at, and tolerating of, the errors and transgressions of others.

THe Law of love toward God and our neighbour, layeth a tye on us to procure and promove the well-fare and good of all men, according to our place and power, and to hinder the provocation of God and sins of our neighbour, according to our place and power. And to this end, the Lord hath said, *Levit.* 19. 17. *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.* Cains answer to God, saying, *Am I my brothers keeper?* doth not beseem the child of God: and yet some of the Lords renewed children in some cases, do seem to themselves to have done their duty sufficiently, if they for themselves professe the truth, and do in their own personal carriage, what they conceive to be right, albeit they tolerat others to professe, teach and practise

what is falſe and dangerous, and pernicious to themſelves and others. This fault may befall not only Magiſtrates and Paſtors, Parents and Maſters of families, Children and Servants, but alſo be found in all and every one, who do defend or excuſe ſuch an ungodly and dangerous toleration which may provoke God to wrath and inſnare many in a courſe of ſin. The pretences, excuſes and deceits whereby men delude themſelves in this ſin, are the ſame which the Patrons of looſe and licentious toleration of every error in religion do make uſe of, to wit, that mens conſciences muſt be free in the mater of religion, and no wayes be urged to uſe all means which may give them right information, and reſtrain their expreſſion and practice which may infect, pervert or inſnare others among whom they live: for, ſay they, Gods people muſt be a willing people, and God only is Lord of the conſcience: and a curbing of mens profeſſion and practice, ſerves not to make men religious, but hypocrits alſo, and ſuch like other pretences; but no excuſe of this ſort can juſtly hinder any, who is in any place of authority, or power, or relation, to be active or concur to extinguiſh the incendiary fire which may devour the houſe of God, and Kingdom wherein they live: for, whoſoever have power over others, and do not put forth their power to curb and repreſſe thoſe who lay a ſtumbling block before others, do not only not impede the growing contagion and infection of the body wherein they live, but alſo in effect do countenance, protect and promove the ſpreading of the contagion of error & wickedneſs which they do tolerat, yea and private perſons, who do not lament the ſins of ſuch as do deſtroy themſelves and infect others, and do not mourn for the ſins of them alſo who ſhould repreſſe the contagion, do make themſelves acceſſory to theſe ſpreading evils. It is true, many excuſes might here be alledged, which we leave to thoſe who have anſwered the objections of ungodly toleration: but the truth is, the fear of wordly inconveniences oft-times doth more

prevail

prevail for giving way to licentious toleration, then the fear of sin and wrath of God doth prevail for discharging of duty.

This was the sin of the Church of *Pergamus*, which did not take order with, and represse the, seducers of the Lords people and their followers within their jurisdiction, *Rev. 2. 14, 15. I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of* Balaam, *who taught* Balack *to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the* Nicolaitans; *which thing I hate.* This was the sin which Christ did reprehend in the Church of *Thyatira*, *Rev. 2. 20. I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman* Jesabel, *which calleth her self a Prophetesse, to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.*

2. For remedy against this evil, 1. let us verse our selves well in the Law of the Lord revealed in holy Scripture, that we may know well what are the duties which God requireth of every man in his station, and what vices he forbids, lest we mistake vertue for a vice, or vice for a vertue. 2. Let us beware of rash censuring and licentious carping at mens infirmities, as the Apostle *James* giveth commandment; *My brethren, be not many Masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation; for in many things we offend all.* 3. Let us earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints, *Jude, v. 3.* lest seducers draw away the Lords people from the truth of Christ. 4. Let every one consider his station, place and power given to him, and prudently go about the amending of other mens faults and his own also: for otherwayes, a good duty may be marred in a mans hand by imprudent managing thereof. 5. Let a man resolve to meet with difficulties in curbing false doctrine and scandalous practices, and as a wise Wariour to behave himself so, as he may obtain the promises which Christ hath promised

to the victorious, Rev. 2. 17. 26, 27. For, it is much better to displease man for his good and others, then to displease Christ, and make our selves partakers of other mens sin and judgment, and the true convert will easily make the choice.

CHAP. IV.

Concerning the case of the true convert, falling asleep in carnal security under guiltinesse of fleshly pollutions, and dreaming himself to be in no ill condition.

SOmetime the flesh so far prevaileth against the renewed work of the spirit in converts, that not only they are overtaken in a fault (*Gal. 6. 1.*) but also are, as it were, taken captive and led away for a time by the lusts of the flesh, and nearby recalled unto the servitude of some wicked concupiscence: In which condition, it is possible they lye sleeping a long time, till God waken them out of their deadly lethargy. And this condition, alas! is very oft to be found to the dishonour of Christian profession, in these that have begun to live blamelesly, and have fallen back to the filthy pudle of their old conversation, whereby they draw upon themselves and their families Gods wrath and sad judgments: Of this disease we find there were not a few to be found in *Corinth*, 2 Cor. 12. 20, 21.

2. The causes of this fearfull condition are manyfold, and cannot easily be condescended upon: for, many defects and wicked motions of the heart, do usually concur with the neglect of duty, and commission of actual sins, against the direction of the conscience, at least without the remorse of conscience and true repentance, before this fearfull condition fix it self on a man; and of this sinfull sickness, there are sundry degrees. The first is, when the worship of God and obedience of his precepts is performed perfunctoriously, as when the confession of sin, is without sorrow for sin or remorse of sin in particulars; when prayer is made

without

without earneſt deſire, to obtain the requeſt; when deprecation of wrath is made without fear of danger; when interceſſion is made without ſympathy and brotherly affection; when thanksgiving is offered without eſtimation of the benefit received; when ſinging of pſalms is diſcharged without melody and harmony of the heart, when conference of holy ſubjects is not entertained, or diſcharged ſlightly, and without reverence; when the hearing of the Word is without attention of the mind; when the reading of the Scripture is followed without endeavour to profit thereby, without obſervation of the will and providence of God for edification; when the profeſſion of religion is without zeal and fruits ſuitable as occaſion doth offer: whoſoever doth reſt well pleaſed with himſelf in this caſe, he is overtaken by this malady.

The ſecond degree is, when this evil goeth further on, and doth defile the outward man: as when the tongue is not bridled, the man doth not take heed what he ſpeaketh, but lets idle ſpeeches, profane and rotten communication fall out of his mouth, which do not only not ſerve unto edification, but ſerve alſo to corrupt the hearer. And he that pleaſes himſelf in this caſe, declares his religion vain in ſo far, *Jam.* 1.26.

The third degree is, when this evil breaks forth in grievous ſcandalous practices, as in the open profeſſion of ſome errour, in making or fomenting a ſchiſme, in contention, emulation, envy, drunkenneſſe, lasciviouſneſſe, fornication, or ſuch like: for here, dead works do openly appear, and the garment of Chriſtian profeſſion is openly defiled. This ſeemeth to be the condition of many in the Church of *Sardis*, in whom, beſide the profeſſion of chriſtian Religion, little ſpiritual life was to be found. And therefore Chriſt, the ſearcher of hearts, calleth them dead or ready to die, *Rev.* 3.1, 2. *Thou haſt a name that thou art living, but thou art dead*, or in a deadly condition tending to death certainly to follow, if it be continued in, from which

condition our Lord doth except ſome, who had not defiled their garments, but ſo carryed themſelves as their converſation was anſwerable to their holy profeſſion, *ver.* 4.

That this deadly ſickneſſe may be cured, 1. it is neceſſary that the conſcience of ſuch a ſecure ſinner, be wakened both by others and by himſelf, and that by ſetting his ſins before his eyes, together with the merit thereof, and the wrath of God kindled againſt him, and deſtruction at hand if he do not ſpeedily repent him. 2. Heed muſt be taken of Sathans wiles, that the wakened and convicted ſinner deſpair not; for in this caſe there is no ſmall danger of it, when he who had given his name to Chriſt, findeth himſelf to be in Sathans camp and ſervice, and wearing the badge of Sathan in giving ſo publick ſcandal to the people of God. 3. Whatſoever ſpunk of faith or hope, or repentance, or deſire of returning unto God, and ſetting himſelf againſt all ſin hereafter, is found iu ſuch a perſon, muſt be entertained and foſtered, leſt that little ſponk be extinguiſhed which is ready to dye. 4. Let him call to mind the Word of God whereby he was firſt moved to turn unto God, add to conſecrat himſelf to the ſervice of Chriſt, and let him compare his ſometime better converſation, with his late pollutions, that he may be aſhamed, and haſt himſelf in unto nearer fellowſhip with God, from whom he hath ſo filthily and fearfully made defection. 5. Let him be upon his guard and watch over his heart, leſt he be overtaken again by the tentations of Sathan, his own corrupt nature, and the intiſing example of the world, leſt he periſh in his tranſgreſſion, if he ſhall again provoke the Lord. 6. And laſt of all, let him ſet before himſelf the ample promiſes which Chriſt hath made to a victorious wreſtler of this kind, *Rev.* 3. 5. *He that overcometh the ſame ſhall be cloathed in white rayment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,* &c.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Concerning the converts pleasing himself in his luke-warm condition.

IT cometh to passe sometimes, that the true convert, being as he conceiveth sure of his own salvation, becometh negligent in the mater of his sanctification, and worshiping of God in the spirit, and turneth himself about to his own ease and following of what he thinketh lawfull: for, because he conceiveth he hath a sure grip of Christs grace, and of the gifts & benefits flowing from him, so as he needs not now to vex himself in the exercises of religion as sometime he did when he was not sure of his reconciliation with God; therefore he judgeth it sufficient, if he do follow the exercises of religion more coursely, eshew grosse scandalous outbreakings, do some works of almes and charity, as he hath occasion, and follow the works of his calling blamelesly, giving the rest of his time to be spent in worldly cares, ease of his flesh and lawfull recreations. In which condition he pleaseth himself very well, as if he had attained the way of Christian felicity both in soul and body: For he misseth nothing in maters spiritual and necessary to salvation, he is rich and hath need of nothing. Whereupon he troubleth not himself to grow in sanctification, or to set others on work, for adding one vertue to another, if they trouble not the peace of the Church, or do not disgrace religion by a scandalous life: If any man in Christs maters, will be more earnest then his neighbours, he doth not find fault with it, but let him be as diligent as he pleaseth, for he resolveth not to oppose any man in Christs service, nor to presse any man to mend his pace in Christs way, and to say the mater in a word, he is a luke-warm man, neither a reall and feckfull friend to Christ, so long as helyeth in this condition, nor yet an open adversary of Christ or his wayes. In this sickneſſe readily do they fall,

fall, who after that the pains of their new birth, and difficulties in their reconciliation are past, do imprudently lay hold upon their liberation from the terrours of the law, and dream of so sweet rest in their conscience flowing from the Gospel (as if now their enemies being all put to flight, and their bonds wherewith they were bound, were all loosed, broken and laid aside) they might compose themselves to security and sleep, when indeed they should stand upon their watch, and upon their guard, least some other way the enemy should set upon them, and catch them in new snares and straits, as the Apostle doth fore-warn, *Ephes.* 6. 13, 14. This was the condition wherein some converts in the Church of *Laodicea*, Rev. 3. 15. 19. were fallen: for albeit we do not think, that all these who are charged for luke-warmnesse, were regenerat, yet we cannot judge that all the regenerat and true converts, were free of this sicknesse, when we see Christ professing his love to the luke-warm, and out of love directing his reproof toward them, whereby he doth invite them to repentance, and to return to that sweet communion with himself, which they did not follow after, for the time. And to make it appear, that true converts might fall in this luke-warmnesse, he giveth warning to all that have ears to hear, to hearken unto what the Spirit doth speak unto the Churches.

As for remedy of this sicknesse, this lethargy is hardly cured, except the patient be first casten in a fever (as it were) by the wakening of his conscience. To this end let the luke-warm consider with himself, how the Majesty and excellent worth of Christ hath been slighted by this his luke-warmnesse, wherein he hath by his fleshly security made no account of the spiritual riches of Christ, who hath redeemed his own from sin and wrath everlasting, that they may with full bensall of affection serve him. 2. Let him consider how intolerable this disposition of luke-warmnesse is unto Christ, who preferreth the open hostility of aliens, to the luke-

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warm condition of those who professe for him, and hath declared he will not comport with them, but spew them out of his mouth, except they shall speedily repent. 3. Let him consider how many and sad plagues of heart he lyeth under if he examine himself well, which may certifie him of the flame of Gods wrath ready to follow on the smoak of begun spiritual plagues. 4. Let him be speedily humbled before the Lord for his vain gloriation of self-perfections, and supposed need of nothing, when indeed he is blind, naked and miserable. 5. Let him lay hold on Christs love and care of him in calling him to repentance before further wrath should break forth, and take the offer of renewed, and more intimate communion with him, and injoying these precious promises, laid up for the victorious wrestler against this sinfull disposition: for, this is the proper remedy which the great Physician prescribeth for healing this deadly sickness, *Rev.* 3. 17, 18.

CHAP. VI.

Concerning such converts as lean unto the props of carnal confidence and please themselves in this condition.

OFt-times it comes to passe, that true converts, while they conceive that they trust in Christ only, are found to lean too much on their own worth and strength, and graces bestowed on them. In which condition, by so much as they are well pleased with themselves, they do in so far displease God, and do provoke him to jealousie, and they who are most overtaken with this sickness are most sensless of it, and are most malcontent, that any man should suspect them to be in an evil condition; yea, and they conceive, that no man is able to convince them of self-confidence, and here they lye over till God bring them to tryall, wherein their mistake is made clear unto them. Their tryall ordinarily cometh by some affliction, by some powerfull tentation, and by some degree of felt desertion: for,

for, this ſickneſſe, as it is contracted by proſperity, So it is ſoſtered, and hid by proſperity, till the prop of their carnal confidence be ſhaken by unexpected adverſity. Of which purpoſe, that we may ſpeak the more clearly, we ſhall point forth two ſorts of this carnal confidence, and ſhall ſhew the difference of thoſe two ſorts, by the difference of theſe two pillars whereupon carnall confidence is upholden. The one is the common benefits, which God doth ordinarily beſtow on good and bad, renewed and unrenewed perſons. The other is, ſome obſervable meaſure of the operations and fruits of the holy Spirit.

As for confidence in the common benefits of God, ſometimes true converts fall too much in love with earthly and temporal benefits, do ſeek too much after them, embrace them greedily when they obtain them, rejoice too much while they injoy them, fear too much to loſs them, and mean time do not perceive the exceſſe of their affection about them; and if they be charged as in any meaſure guilty in this caſe, they will not acknowledg their fault, but go about to purge themſelves of this ſort of failing, ſaying, we know our duty, that if riches increaſe we ſhould not ſet our heart thereon, that we ſhould not love too much our own children, parents, parties, friends and comfortable relations, that we ſhould not delight too much in proſperity nor glory in the common gifts and enduments of the mind, wherein ungodly men may excell, and go far above us; that we ſhould not affect too much the favour of men, or eſteem too much of being honoured of men. They will alſo readily confeſſe, that they are not far from the danger of being drunk with proſperity, and falling into the ſleep of carnal ſecurity, and leaning too much weight on this weak pillar of creature-confidence: But for time by-paſt they are ready to averr, they have been very cautious, leſt they ſhould fall in this fault, and for time to come, that they hope to watch againſt all ſnares of this ſort, and ſo they think

think all is well; but when it doth pleaſe God in his wiſe diſpenſation to change their outward condition, and to turn their externall proſperity in adverſity; when God takes away the comfortable benefits which he had beſtowed on them, and brings upon them ſome ſad calamity, incontinent they are in the dumps, and ſit down aſtoniſhed, they begin to call Gods love in queſtion whereof they boaſted before. Thus their faith diſcovereth its weakneſſe, and the mixture of carnal confidence with their faith doth clearly appear, which before did lurk as droſſe doth in the gold or ſilver before it be purified, which doth give the maſſe a greater bulk without greater worth or price. This infirmity and miſtake the Pſalmiſt did obſerve in himſelf, *Pſal.* 30.6,7. *In my proſperity I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved; thou didſt hide thy face and I was troubled.* This infirmity of the convert, and his miſtake, ſhall be yet more manifeſt, if we ſhall compare the confidence of the convert in the promiſes of God for food and rayment ſo long as God giveth riches, with their confidence when their means do fail and poverty cometh on. The promiſes of God remain the ſame in the having and wanting of riches, but there is a great ods between their confidence to be furniſhed when they have riches and their confidence when means do fail, which confidence now, is very feeble. Wherefrom doth this change come let us ſee? Certainly it cometh from the removing of the carnal props of their confidence: for when upon the failing of theſe props and pillars, faith in the promiſe doth ſtagger, it is a ſure evidence, that they have leaned too much weight on the means, who miſ-believe when the means do fail.

3. For curing of this ſort of carnal confidence, and leaning too much on temporal benefits, let the convert thus miſtaken, after his experience felt, that he hath been carnally confident, not be diſcouraged, as if his confidence, which he ſeemed to have placed on God, were altogether vain, and in no degree ſpiritual: but let him, firſt,

firſt, be humbled before God, and ſubmit himſelf to the Lords rod; let him acknowledge the wiſdom, juſtice and mercy of God, who hath removed this prop of carnal confidence, and reduced him from going aſtray to depend more on God then he hath done. 2. Let him ſtrengthen his faith in Chriſt, according to the tenor of the covenant of Grace, and that ſo much the more as he finds his own unrighteouſneſſe, in following and relying on creature-comforts to have been great. 3. Let him ſet his affections upon things ſpiritual, which are above the earth, and to be found in Jeſus Chriſt, who is at the right hand of the Father, *Col.* 3. 1. 23. and to looſe his eſtimation and affection from theſe things that are on earth. 4. Becauſe this ſickneſſe is not well obſerved, except in the time of adverſity, let the afflicted perſon approve himſelf in the point of ſincerity of adherence unto God, by his truſting in God now, when he wanteth means and creature-comforts, as *Job* did, who in this condition bleſſed God for the giving of the benefits, and bleſſed God at the removing of them from him, *Job.* 1. 21. For, by ſo doing, he ſhall learn both to have and want, and in every condition to be content, as the Apoſtle was taught, *Phil*, 4. 12. and this is for the firſt ſort of carnal confidence.

The other ſort of carnal confidence, is that which too much leaneth to ſome apparent meaſure of the operation and fruits of the holy Spirit, obſerved by the convert in himſelf: and this ſickneſſe may be taken up and perceived chiefly by compariſon of the converts ſtronger confidence of the love of God toward him, ſo long as he can find evident ſignes of his regeneration, and work of the holy Spirit in himſelf, with his weaker confidence of the love of God toward him under the cloud of deſertion, or under ſome powerfull temptation, when theſe evident ſignes of his converſion are darkened, or do not appear ſo clearly unto himſelf as they did before. In which caſe, his confidence is greatly weakned, and his faith not a little ſhaken with doubting. In both

both the one and the other condition, the covenant of Grace ſtandeth fixed, and the promiſes of the Goſpel remain the ſame, and the convert ſtill adhereth to the covenant and claimeth intereſt in Chriſt, more or leſſe confident. Whence cometh then this difference between his former confidence which was ſtrong, and his weaker confidence now in the change of his caſe, being brought low? Certainly it proceedeth from the ſmiting of the pillar whereupon his former confidence was too much fixed: for, whenſoever the miſt is cleared up, and he findeth the livelyneſſe of the work of grace in himſelf, his confidence convaleſceth, and returns to it's former ſtrength, as it ſeemeth to him; and when his graces are darkened, he falleth in a languiſhing weakneſſe of faith.

This ſickneſſe is ſo frequently incident to the Saints, that few ſhall be found who are not again and again overtaken in it: for, how few are they who are not much more confident when they find a heart freely poured forth in prayer, when they injoy the peace of God in their heart, when the love of God is ſhed abroad in their heart, when they find the conſolations of the holy Spirit, when they obſerve the fruits of the holy Spirit in themſelves, when the candle of the Lord ſhineth in their ſoul, and the tokens of Gods favour toward them are manifeſt; and on the other hand, when they find their ſpiritual condition changed, when darkneſſe falleth on their ſpirit, when they find themſelves unfit for worſhip and unable to do ſervice, but moſt of all, when they perceive tokens of fatherly wrath againſt them ſuper-added unto the foreſaid evils; in this caſe, who is he, that beſide the inevitable perturbation of mind incident to thoſe who are ſtrongeſt in faith, doth not find a diminution of his former confidence, and a conflict with temptations, fears, doubts and difficulties? which diminution and abating of his confidence in his tryals and inward exerciſes, doth evidently prove, that in his beſt condition he hath laid too much weight upon

on the mutable diſpoſition of his ſoul, and hath not ſo ſtucken to the Word of Gods grace through Jeſus as became him.

2. That this ſickneſſe may be the more eaſily cleared and cured, it is expedient to anſwer ſome queſtions, which being diſcuſſed, may inform and edifie the afflicted.

Queſtion 1.

THe firſt queſtion which the afflicted may propound, is this, Seing the ſignes of Gods favour, manifeſted in the beſtowing and continuing of common benefits and gifts outward and inward, do certainly ſerve to confirm a mans faith in God, is it not very reaſonable to ſay, that the ſignes of Gods wrath, manifeſted in the removing of thoſe benefits, do certainly ſerve to debilitat and weaken a mans faith?

Anſ. 1. Signs of Gods favour, and ſigns of Gods wrath, are not inconſiſtent, becauſe God can carry love and favour to a man, and be angry at him alſo for the preſent ill diſpoſition wherein he is; for, love and fatherly wrath, are not oppoſit and inconſiſtent, but love and hatred are inconſiſtent. 2. Let it be granted, that any ſignes whatſoever of Gods favour, may be made uſe of by the convert for ſtrengthening of his faith; yet it muſt not be granted, that the taking away of thoſe ſignes of favour, ſhould be made uſe of for weakening of a mans faith: For, many things may encourage a man to do his duty, which being removed, muſt not diſcourage him, or juſtly hinder him to do his duty. 3. There is a great difference between the man, who never found any other ſign of Gods favour beſide proſperity in common benefits, and the man who, beſide common benefits, hath felt a work of grace upon his ſpirit, bringing him unto the ſenſe of ſin, and chaſing him to Chriſt, and making him to take on his yoke. The firſt ſort of men, can neither from the having nor wanting, or removal of common benefits, conclude eh is loved or hated, for ſo are we taught, *Eccleſ.* 9. 1, 2.

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No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him, all things come alike to all, &c. But a man of this ſort hath reaſon to judge, that the ſending on him adverſity, and wakening of him out of a fleſhly and deadly ſecurity, doth ſpeak more of Gods favour to him, then his proſperity did. And this other ſort of men, who have felt a work of ſpecial grace on their hearts, may make uſe both of their proſperity and adverſity for confirmation of their faith. 4. Put caſe that a convert, chaſed unto Chriſt in the ſenſe of his ſin, and reſolved to bear Chriſts yoke upon him, ſhall find common benefits taken back from him in fatherly wrath; yet muſt he not yield to the weakening of his faith, but rather yet more humble himſelf, in the ſenſe of his ſins which have ſtirred up wrath againſt him; and flye in to Chriſt, and lay hold more cloſely upon his grace, becauſe God, being offended, is not pacified nor pleaſed, ſave only by flying in to Jeſus Chriſt.

Queſt. II.

Q. BUt what will you ſay unto them, whoſe confidence is weakened whether they will or not, whenſoever they apprehend God angry againſt them, and eſpecially when they feel that God, being provoked juſtly, removeth gifts and benefits comfortable from them?

Anſ. It is not to be doubted, that the confidence of many true converts is ſhaken and weakened in this caſe: but the queſtion is, what ſhall be ſaid unto them? We anſwer, that they muſt acknowledge, that they have leaned too much upon theſe carnal props, the failing whereof maketh them to fall. 2. Let them be humbled yet more becauſe of ſuch ſins as have provoked God to change his diſpenſation toward them. 3. Let them lean more upon the only rock of free grace in Jeſus Chriſt offered in the Goſpel, for the comfort and relief of all thoſe, who, in the ſenſe of ſin and unworthineſſe, in the ſenſe of their ill deſerving, and of any meaſure of apparent fatherly wrath, that hereafter, how-

ever it fair with them, they may rely upon Jesus Christ, who is the only foundation to build our selves upon, and whose grace is sufficient to help and uphold them, who have their recourse unto him in every condition, whether it be adversity or prosperity.

Quest. III.

Q. ALbeit common benefits are not sufficient evidences of Gods favour, yet new obedience of faith and fruits of the spirit, are sure signes of Gods special favour bestowed only on the Elect: Seing then, as these signes when they are present, serve much for the strengthening of faith, so also when they are amissing, have as great force of reason to debilitat faith, yea seing faith without fruits is dead, may it not be concluded where no fruits are, no faith is?

Ans. If the question be of the universal want of all fruits of faith, such as is to be found in all unrenewed men, whose fruit cannot be good so long as the tree is evil, whose seeming service cannot be acceptable, so long as they remain unreconciled to God through Christ, let the question be yielded unto. But we are speaking of the true convert, in whom there is a missing of the measure of formerly felt fruits, and that in the time present, wherein by some temptation or tryal, their faith is sifted and winnowed. And here indeed there is a vast difference between them that were never humbled in the sense of their sins, nor led for relief from sin and misery unto Jesus Christ, and the true convert, who hath renounced the works of darkness, and hath fled unto Christ and consecrated himself to his service, and who is set upon a new course of life, hath brought forth new fruits of repentance, faith, love and hope, and hath felt consolation in this course; and now under exercise of conscience, looketh upon himself as barren ground, doth lament his impotency to bring forth good fruits, and while he is under this exercise, liveth in a sad condition, blameless and free of scandal-giving: great ods between

between this man, and a man yet in nature. We grant in the unrenewed man, who is a ſtranger to the life of grace and true godlineſſe, the ſentence holds, *No fruits no faith*; but as for the convert, who hath had comfort in Chriſt, and brought forth good fruits in ſome meaſure, he muſt not reaſon from his preſent dead condition, felt and lamented barrenneſſe, to the denying of true faith in Chriſt, or to the weakening of his faith, or marring his confidence further, then to acknowledge he hath leaned too much on his formerly felt fruits, and hath not grounded himſelf wholly on Chriſt, and the rock of free grace in him, but may and ſhould maintain his faith in Chriſt againſt his diſcouragment, that he may be inabled to bring forth more ripe and aboundant fruits.

Queſt. IV.

Q. BUt what ſhall be ſaid to humbled converts, who looking to the holy Law of God, and finding no fruits, ſuch as ſhould be, do paſſe ſentence in the time of tentation, upon all their works, as unworthy of the name of the fruits of the Spirit, and then do diſpute againſt their own faith by the Apoſtles words, *Jam.* 2. 20. *faith without works, is dead?*

Anſ. If the conſcience do pronounce according to the truth as the mater is indeed, it cannot be denied but faith without works is dead; and God is greater then the conſcience and knoweth all things: But when the conſcience is miſled by a tentation powerfully preſſed in by Sathan, in the time of ſome ſad affliction, and appearance of Gods diſpleaſure, the teſtimony of the conſcience is not a ſufficient proof to infer ſo hard a concluſion: for, it cometh to paſſe oft-times, that the convert, who liveth blameleſſy, and entertaineth the love and purpoſe of well-doing in his heart, followeth the exerciſes of religion conſtantly, is not negligent in his calling, and is ready upon occaſion offered to let forth the fruits of love to his neighbour, for all this ſometimes walketh in

darkneſſe, and under deſertion, ſeeth no light, as *Iſaiah*, 50. 10. In this caſe it may be, he ſet all his works at nought, as no wayes anſwerable to the Lords Law. I ſee nothing (ſaith he) but ſin in me, I ſee no fruit of true faith in me, I feel no operation of the holy Spirit in me, ſave the work of convincing me of ſin and unrighteouſneſſe. In this caſe we muſt not give credit to the afflicted, but convince him rather of his error, and in ſpecial of his leaning too much weight on his works before this ſad exerciſe fell upon him; for, when a convert maintaineth his faith in Chriſt, only ſo oft, and ſo long as he findeth in himſelf the fruits of new obedience, but when he hath new experience of the power of the body of death, and findeth the courſe of good behaviour, and bringing forth good fruits to be interrupted in himſelf, incontinent he reſiles from his confidence, ſuch a man certainly giveth evidence, that he hath relyed too much on his former felt righteouſneſſe in himſelf: for he doth as if he durſt not for ſin approach unto Chriſt, and ſo he falleth in *Peters* caſe, who looking on his own ſinfulneſſe and the brightneſſe of Chriſts Godhead ſhining in a recent miracle, cryeth out, *Luke*, 5. 8. *depart from me, O Lord, I am a ſinfull man*: for, *Peter* in this caſe did forget Chriſts mediatory office, and that he ſtood ſo much the more need of Chriſts drawing near to him, as he was a man convinced of ſinfulneſſe. Another anſwer we give to this queſtion, the afflicted perſon muſt not think, that he wants altogether the fruits of faith, albeit he find them to be ſhort of the perfection which the Law doth require, albeit he find not the fruits whenſoever he would exact them, albeit he find them not in that meaſure as he hath found them before: For as trees are not to be eſteemed dead, or barren, which bring forth fruits in due ſeaſon, albeit they bear not fruit in winter, So faith is not to be eſteemed dead, which, as occaſion is offered, bringeth forth the fruit, at one time, of mercy, at another time, of juſtice and equity, at another time, the evidence

evidence of zeal, at another time, of love, and other vertues, albeit when occasion or opportunity offereth not, it doth not exercise such and such vertues: yea, albeit sometimes when occasion calleth for the evidencing of such and such gracious vertues, the convert be sometime found in-laking or short of doing duty, or guilty of doing contrary to duty, faith must not be counted dead for all that: Because it may come to passe, that faith may be so wounded, and fall sick and languish, and fall in a swound, that it cannot bring forth fruits till it be recovered of its sickness, as we may see in *Jonah*, *David* and *Peter*, whose faith fainted, but failed not altogether: It is true, they suspected they were cut off, and gone when they were in hard exercise, but after that they did look up to the mercy of God in Christ, draw near unto him, and did shew themselves alive in the Lord, and to be in the state of grace. Last of all we answer, that the regrate of the humbled soul of its barrenness and short-coming of bringing forth fruits as it would, is no small evidence of life and sense in the inward man: And of such a disposition it may be said, as it is written, *Cant.* 2. 13. *The figtree putteth forth its green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell*: For he that is fled to Christ, and laments his barrenness, is a lover of doing good works, and of bringing forth the fruits of the Gospel.

Quest. V.

Q. But how can a man maintain his faith in Christ, who after examination findeth no evidence at all of his conversion, and that all his former life hath been spent in the unfruitfull course of corrupt nature; and the mater is so indeed, he hath lived after the course of this world, a stranger to the life of God and grace?

Ans. Let such a mans examination and sentence of himself stand, being according to the truth: but this sentence of himself, must not hinder him from believing in Christ or from flying to him for refuge, for remissi-

on of ſin, for reconciliation, and furniture of grace to bring forth better fruits then he hath brought forth before; he hath proven againſt himſelf, that in time by-gone he hath not been a regenerat man, hath not been a believer in Chriſt, but he hath not cut off himſelf from flying to Chriſt and believing in him for time to come: for, he muſt put difference betwen theſe two queſtions, whether I have been of the number of ſincere believers in Chriſt heretofore? and whether I muſt now flye to Chriſt for time to come, that I may be found hereafter, and henceforth a true convert believing in Chriſt? His former want of good fruits altogether, doth prove him not to have been a believer in Chriſt for time by-paſt, which is the firſt queſtion; and the ſame want of all good fruits heretofore, doth anſwer the other queſtion for his preſent duty, and in time to come, to wit, that now except he will periſh, he muſt flye to Chriſt and believe in him. In proving of this aſſertion, that I have heretofore for ſuch a ſpace of time been a true convert, I muſt bring forth the evidence of my faith by my works, as the Apoſtle *James* appointeth, *ſhew me thy faith by thy works, and I will ſhew thee my faith by my works.* But in proving this other aſſertion, to wit, I muſt now flye to Chriſt while the offer is made to me of reconciliation, leſt I periſh; it will ſuffice to produce, firſt, my want of good fruits, and next the commandment of the Goſpel, charging me to flye to Chriſt for refuge in time, leſt I periſh: And ſo a man muſt maintain the way of believing in Chriſt Jeſus for time to come, whether he find he hath been a fertile or a barren branch in time by-gone, or not.

Queſt. VI.

Q. SEing the Apoſtle (2 *Pet.* 1. 10.) commands us to make our calling and election ſure by well-doing, how can it be called carnal confidence which in part doth lean upon good works? For, ſeing aſſurance

and

and certainty of our effectual calling is not attained unto, but by reasoning from our good works, that we are called effectually, and are elected, how do not our works support the assurance of faith concerning our calling and election, and so may be leaned unto?

Ans. A man may make use of his good works for confirmation of his faith, and yet not lean his confidence upon his works, but upon the grace of God, who hath called him of his free grace, and made him imbrace the offer of his free grace, and given unto him both to will and to do of his free grace, and made him to be Gods workman-ship, created of Gods free grace unto good works, wherein he hath made him to walk. Thus grace is by Gods word and working cleared up to the believer to rest upon, without laying too much weight upon the mans work: but if a man lay hold on Christ and his free grace, only then, when he observeth in himself such and such fruits of faith, and looseth or slacketh his grips of Christ when he feels deadnesse and indisposition to good works, justly we may call this a carnal confidence in his works: for when he ought, with *Paul*, Rom. 7. 24, 25. so much the more to flye in to Christ and his righteousnesse, as he findeth the body of death powerfull in him, and in-born sin strong to hinder his obedience, he doth contrary wayes abate of his confidence, languish and decay in his faith, and look like a departer from Christ, we must say, he putteth carnal confidence in his own works.

Quest. VII.

Q. But seing it is impossible to perswade me of the truth and sincerity of saving faith in me, except I do observe in me, and can bring forth my good works to prove the reality of faith in me; how is it possible that I should not lean weight on my good works, seing the proof of my faith is by my works, which proof if I have not, I am at a stand, I cannot prove my self to have been a true believer in Christ, I cannot perswade

my self that I have been and am a true believer in Christ?

Anſ. 1. The obſervation of the fruits of faith in me is not the only proof of my believing in Chriſt; for, the very act of imbracing the offer of reconciliation made to me in the Goſpel, and flying unto Chriſt for a refuge, when I am chaſed by the Law, by the conſcience, and felt wrath purſuing me for ſin, may be clear to me by its own light and ſcriptural evidence, albeit (it being poſſibly the very inſtant of my converſion) I cannot produce any fruits or evidences of my converſion paſt; or elſe what ſhall be ſaid of malefactors on the ſcaffold preſently to be put to death, and poſſibly not wakened in conſcience before, not fled to Chriſt before? What ſhall be ſaid of ſick perſons near unto death, who being ſelf-condemned, do betake themſelves in their laſt agony unto the grace of God in Chriſt offered to ſelf-condemned ſinners in the Goſpel? 2. I muſt put difference between a reaſon to prove that *I have believed*, and a reaſon why *I may and muſt now believe*. The reaſon to prove that I have believed, is from the effect to prove the cauſe thereof, to wit, faith to be in me: but the reaſon why I may now, and muſt believe, is from the cauſe to infer the effect that ſhould be in me: the cauſe of believing in Chriſt, is Gods command to ſelf-condemned ſinners; which command I muſt now obey leſt I periſh, and ſo if I find fruits, I prove I have believed, becauſe I feel the love of God ſhed abroad in my heart, and that I love God who hath freely loved me; and here I reaſon from the effect, to prove that the cauſe of this fruit, to wit, ſaving faith, hath preceeded and is gone before. Again I prove that I ſhould believe, becauſe the offer of the Goſpel and of free grace in Chriſt, made to all ſelf-condemned perſons, renouncing confidence in their own worth or works, is made to me, with a command to believe in the Son of God, Chriſt Jeſus; for which cauſe, I may and ought to caſt my ſelf upon his grace, who juſtifieth the ungodly, flying to him,

without

without the works of the Law. 3. I must put difference between my *having* fruits of faith in me, and my *observing* and finding these fruits in me: for, a true convert may have both faith and fruits; and for the time, being under tryal and temptation, may be so darkened, that he can see nothing in himself but sin, and apparent wrath pursuing him for sin, as may be seen in *Jonah* in the belly of the fish, *Jonah* 2. 4. and, *David*, *Ps.* 51 9,10. 4. I must put difference between my perswasion, that I have been and am a true convert and a sincere believer, and my perswasion, that I have right, reason and good warrand to believe in Christ in my lowest condition: howsoever then I find my self emptied of all signes of saving grace in me for the time, yet my perswasion, that I should in this sad condition flye to Christ and believe in him, doth serve to make me consent heartily unto the offer of the covenant of grace in Christ, doth serve to make way for my justification, and looseth all doubts and objections of Sathan tempting me to mis-believe, and to run away from Christ and the offered mercy in him. 5. And last of all, I must put difference between making use of good fruits brought forth by me, for confirmation of my faith, and my putting confidence in, or laying weight on, these good fruits: for, many true converts do here fail, and do not mark the mistakes; for when they find love to God and his Saints, with fear and holy reverence, and such other like signes of grace in their hearts, and outward fruits thereof in their life, then they do believe in Christ and rejoice in him: but when at another time, they find hardnesse of heart, profanity and perversenesse of a wicked nature in themselves, they are like to quite their interest in the covenant of Grace, and to stand aloof from Christ like strangers, when they should most be humbled and creep in to him for remission of sin, and hiding of their nakednesse by his imputed righteousnesse. And what is this in effect else, then in the first place to lean on their works and holy disposition, as if there were merit in them, and

then

then after in the next place to believe in Christ who hath furnished them those fruits? whereas they should, in the sense of their sin and unworthinesse, first, flye to Christ, and firmly adhere to him by faith, that out of his fulnesse they may receive grace for grace, according as we are taught to do by Christ himself, *Joh.* 15. 5. *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me, you can do nothing.*

CHAP. VII.

Concerning the case of the convert in some point of doctrine deluded, and pleasing himself in this condition.

TO speak of delusion and bewitching in the general, requireth a large Treatise. It shall suffice our purpose to speak of it, as it hath place in the point of doctrine and practice erroneous: Which we describe thus, *Delusion is a powerfull operation of a lying Spirit, whereby he obtrudes to men some noysome error in doctrine or practise contrary to true doctrine, fairded over with sophisticál deceits, and doth perswade inconsiderate souls effectually to receive the error for truth, and to defend and spread it in their rash zeal*: For explication of which description, we say, 1. *delusion is a powerfull operation of a lying Spirit*, wherein Sathan in Gods judgment is permitted to put forth his power in lying effectually. Therefore in all his effectuall delusions, there is a concurring righteous judgment of God in loosing reins to the tempter, that by delusion, one sin in one degree, may be punished by a following sin in a higher degree. No wonder therefore that a lying Spirit do work more effectually when he is not restrained by the powerfull hand of God. 2. We say, that delusion is in some dangerous error tending to the damage of the Church, and hazard of souls. And this we say not, as if we did think, that any sin doth not draw with it, the merit of death (for the wages of every sin is death) but because Sathan is not so busie, to spred and foment such errors,

errors, as are leſſe perillous, as he is active in ſuch errors which do moſt tend to peſter the Church and divert the profeſſors of religion from the path way of ſaving doctrine. And to this purpoſe he eſſayes all means, that he may obſcure and darken the truth, and deviſe and ſpread abroad the moſt pernicious errors. Mean time he is not idle in ſowing and ſpreading leſſer errors, that he may ſtir up contention and jangling in the Church, whereby precious time, which ſhould be ſpent for mutual edification, may be idly waſted in needleſſe diſputes, and mens minds may be prepared to receive groſſer errors. Thirdly, we put ſome difference between errors in doctrine and errors in practice, albeit there cannot be one error in practice, whether it be in the external worſhip or government of the Church, or in outward converſation, which being ſtiffly maintained, hath not ſome error of judgment and doctrine joyned with it, or elſe it ſhould not be contrary to ſound doctrine; yet there may be an error in doctrine and judgment of the mind, when in the outward practice the error may lye hid, and men of contrary judgment may conſent and agree in the ſame practice. Fourthly, we preſuppoſe the errors, whereof we are ſpeaking, to be coloured and covered with fair pretenſes, and to be found deceitfull ſophiſtry: For otherwayes a diſciple of Chriſt could not be eaſily inſnared, if the error were ſeen in its own colours, if it were demonſtrat unto him with ſound reaſon to be contrary to ſound doctrine and pernicious to the welfare of the Church, and to mens ſouls. For in this caſe, every ingenuous and honeſt mind would keep off from the error as from a deep pit: But Sathan ſetteth forth the error, as if it were no error but moſt conſonant to wholſome doctrine, and profitable for mens ſouls and the Churches good. And by plauſible pretenſes, ſets out the error ſo as it may ſeem lovely and worthy to be defended, and ſpred abroad by all means. Fifthly, in this deluſion we are ſpeaking of, we preſuppoſe, that in the perſon deluded

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there is a perſwaſion (ſtronger then any probation which he hath) can ſupport: For here the efficacie of error doth ſpecially appear, when the lying Spirit, by probable conjectures, appearance of advantage and ſophiſtical diſputation, doth perſwade the deluded ſoul, that the error is as ſure as if by divine oracle it were revealed and declared to be a truth. How this can be, and how Sathan worketh this perſwaſion, it is not to our purpoſe to make inquiry: For, lying Spirits have their own way, unknown to us, whereby they inſinuat and ſuggeſt their errors unto men. It may ſuffice us, that the Scripture hath taught us that Sathan can form objections againſt our faith, *Epheſ.* 6. 10, 11, 12. and throw them at us as fiery darts, and work ſtrong perſwaſions in unſtable or ignorant ſouls. Such was the perſwaſion of the Galatians, which the Apoſtle avoucheth to have been procured not by God who had called them, *Gal.* 5. 8. Sixthly, we preſuppoſe in a powerfull deluſion a baſtard and miſled zeal, making the deluded man ardently to defend and promove the error which he hath embraced: For, this is Sathans main endeavour, when he hath leavened with error one or moe in a Church, to make all the uſe of them he can to leaven the Church with the ſame error.

And to the intent this mater may be the more uſefully ſpoken of, three queſtions muſt be anſwered ſo briefly as may be. The firſt queſtion is, whether ſuch a powerfull deluſion may befall a true convert? We anſwer it is poſſible, and experience proveth it: that it is poſſible, we learn from the Apoſtles fear, 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. *I fear leaſt by any means as the ſerpent beguiled* Eve *through his ſubtility, So your minds ſhould be corrupted from the ſimplicity which is in Chriſt.* He was feared alſo for the Coloſſians, leſt they ſhould be deluded, *Col.* 2. 4. *This I ſay, leſt any man beguile you with intiſing words.* And ver. 8. *Beware leſt any man ſpoil you through philoſophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Chriſt.* Wherein it is clear, that

that this sort of deluſion may befall the Saints. Now that it hath indeed and in experience befallen ſome true converts, it is evident by what Chriſt ſaith to the Church of *Thyatira*, Rev. 2. 20. *I have a few things againſt thee, becauſe thou ſuffereſt that woman* Jezabel, *which calleth her ſelf a propheteſſe to teach and to ſeduce my ſervants to commit fornication and to eat things ſacrificed to Idols.* And the Apoſtle ſhews the mater evidently to have befallen the Galatians, *Gal.* 3. 1. *O fooliſh*, or mad *Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you ſhould not obey the truth?* Secondly, that this deluſion drew deep, and was very dangerous, appears, *Gal.* 1. 6. *I marvel that you are ſo ſoon turned from him that called you into the grace of Chriſt unto another Goſpel.* And, *Gal.* 5. 2. *they were in danger to loſe all benefit by Chriſt*; and, *ver.* 4. *in danger and on the way to fall from grace.* Thirdly, the Galatians did erre both in doctrine and practice; in doctrine, becauſe they ſought to be juſtified by the works of the Law, *Gal.* 5. 4. In practice they erred, *Gal.* 4. 10, 11. *ye obſerve dayes and moneths, and times and years, I am afraid of you, leſt I have beſtowed upon you labour in vain.* Fourthly, their error was fairded with the pretenſe of the truth, which made them greedily embrace the error: for, *Gal.* 4. 9. they turned themſelves back to Moſaical rites and ceremonies now aboliſhed under the pretenſe of ſometime commanded duties. And, *ver.* 21. they deſired to be under the Law, and ſo run themſelves under the curſe. Fifthly, their error was not by a light opinion held by them, but by a full perſwaſion, wrought in them, not by Chriſt, but by a lying ſpirit, *Gal.* 5. 8. Sixthly, this baſtard, and unhallowed zeal was evidenced both in the ſeducing teachers, and in the miſled Galatians, *Gal.* 4. 17. *They zealouſly affect you, but not well: yea they would exclude you that you might affect them*, that is, draw you away from the ſociety of Chriſt and his true Apoſtles, that you might be their affectionat diſciples. And as for the Galatians, deluded by Sathan, by their means, they turned their ardent

ardent affection toward the Apoſtle almoſt in hatred againſt him, *Gal.* 4. 15, 16. *Am I become your enemy becauſe I tell you the truth?*

Hence it is clear, that true converts are ſubject to this evil, and ready to fall in it except they watch carefully, and earneſtly deal with God to keep them from deceivers: for, many young converts are like lambs and ſheep, very ſimple, and being lately turned unto the courſe of holineſſe, they are eaſily taken with every appearance of piety, whereof if they do apprehend any ſeeming ſigns in ſeducers, they ſuſpect no guile in wolves clad with ſheeps skins, wherethrough they are overtaken unawares, and moved to ſeparat from the ſociety of the Saints by the fleſhly authors of diviſion, who by good words and fair ſpeeches deceive the hearts of the ſimple, *Rom.* 16. 17, 18.

Queſt. 2. As for the ſecond queſtion what are the effects and marks of ſuch a deluſion? We anſwer, there is a deluſion active wherein Sathan and his ſeducing inſtruments do ſet themſelves on work to delude, and there is a paſſive deluſion in the party deluded by Sathan and his inſtruments. The effects of the deluding or lying ſpirit, and the marks of deluſion in the party deluded do concur; for, the effects of Sathans powerfull deluſion do appear in the party deluded as ſigns and evidences of the effectual deluſion: Theſe effects and ſigns albeit they be many, we ſhall content our ſelves to ſpecifie ſome of them.

The firſt and chief effect and ſign of deluſion, is, the rejecting of a point of true doctrine, and the avouching of a falſe error contrary thereto. This we call the firſt and principal ſign, or mark of deluſion; becauſe except this ſign be found, other ſigns albeit they point forth a perilous condition, yet without this effect and ſign be joyned, they do not prove deluſion in the ſtrict ſenſe wherein we take it here. This ſign the Apoſtle doth point at in the Galatians, *Gal.* 3. 1. *O fooliſh Galatians! who hath bewitched you, that you ſhould not obey the*

the truth? where he challengeth them for rejecting the truth and obedience unto it.

The second effect and mark of deluſion, is a baſtard perſwaſion whereby the perſon deluded layeth hold on a moſt falſe error, as if it were a moſt ſolid truth, and without hink or doubt reſts upon it, as if it were a divine truth: This ſort of perſwaſion we call a baſtard and illegitimat perſwaſion, 1. becauſe it is not wrought by the Spirit of Chriſt: for which cauſe the Apoſtle makes the Galatians perſwaſion not to be right and legitimat, *Gal.* 5. 8. Secondly, becauſe this perſwaſion neither leans upon upon Gods Word rightly underſtood, nor upon any firm reaſon deduced reaſonably from the Scripture. Thirdly, becauſe this perſwaſion of the deluded that his tenet is true, is ſtronger then his perſwaſion of many articles of his faith, for which he hath clear Scripture; and yet this perſwaſion of the deluded is not ſo ſtrong when it cometh to tryal, as weak faith well grounded is, which when the force of tentation and perſecution cometh, is more able to bear out, then the deluded mans perſwaſion wherein he glorieth. Upon which ground, the Apoſtle doth not doubt but the Galatians, being true converts, ſhall renounce this falſe perſwaſion, and return to the truth which they had forſaken. Laſt of all, we call this a baſtard perſwaſion, becauſe it draweth its original and ſtrength, not from clearneſſe of Gods revealed truth, but from the agreement which the error hath with ſome carnal affection, whereunto this error doth ſervice, for which reſpect, carnal and corrupt reaſon is eaſily drawn to maintain it pertinaciouſly.

The third effect and ſign of deluſion, is, the cauſing diviſion and ſchiſme in the viſible Church needleſly; and this effect doth readily follow on the former two: for where error in doctrine, and in the rule of practice, getteth up the head, it falleth out inevitably, that the defenders of the truth and ſpreaders of the error, ſhall fall in contention and diviſion. In which caſe, the Apoſtle

Apoſtle doth exhort the Romans, howſoever they ſhould pity the miſled multitude, yet carefully to mark the cauſers of the diviſion, *Rom.* 16.17. *I beſeech you bretbren, mark them which cauſe diviſion and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them;* which preſuppoſeth they deſerve excommunication if they be obſtinat.

The fourth effect and ſign of deluſion, is fooliſhneſſe or a ſort of madneſſe, which appeareth partly in the inconſiderat embracing of the error, and partly in the defending and promoving of it: for, if the error in it ſelf be conſidered, it is a falſhood and deceit; or if we look to the haſty receiving of it, when no ſound proof can be had of it, it is fooliſhneſſe; or if we conſider the damage which followeth the defending and ſpreading of it, which the party deluded did not fore-ſee and guard againſt, it is a madneſſe, and cannot but be ſo: for, a falſe doctrine, albeit at firſt it may carry the appearance of piety and prudence, yet when it is compared with Scripture and rule of right reaſon led by Scripture, it is found nothing but vanity, falſhood, coſening and deceit, as the Apoſtle doth inſinuat concerning the errors which in his time were ſprouting forth in the Church, *Col.* 2. 23. *which things have a ſhew indeed of wiſdom in will-worſhip and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour, to the ſatisfying of the fleſh,* that is, they are not worthy of any eſtimation, for they ſerve only to ſatisfie fleſhly corruption of nature, as he obſerveth in the authors of Angel-worſhiping, of whom he averreth, *that they intrude themſelves into thoſe things which they have not ſeen, vainly puft up by their fleſhly mind,* Col. 2. 18. And he calleth the Galatians *fooliſh*, or mad, for their embracing of the error, *Gal.* 3. 1. and for haſty embracing of it, *Gal.* 1. 6. *I marvel that you are ſo ſoon removed from him that called you into the grace of Chriſt, unto another Goſpel*: for there are many who after much time ſpent, and pains taken, upon them by faithfull Paſtors, do not come up to the underſtanding

understanding of the heads of the doctrine held forth in the Catechise, and proofs given thereof by Scripture, and yet will very readily imbrace an error, and seem to themselves so well to understand it, and to be able to argue for defence of it; whose folly and madnesse may be seen in this, that they do not consider the bitter fruits of their error; to make a schisme in the Church they think nothing of it; to rent the body of Christ they care not for it: and for this very cause, the Apostle reproveth the Corinthians, that falling in contest and contention among themselves about the excellency of their teachers, they rent the Church, the body of Christ, did despise his dominion and government, and gave his glory unto men, and did not regard the lamentable consequences of the schisme; no not when they were admonished and rebuked by the wiser sort of their brethren, 1 *Cor.* 1. 11. and, 2 *Cor.* 10. 2.

The fifth effect and sign of delusion, is the pride of the deluded, and vain gloriation in their error: for, the Corinthians gloried in men, and made it a matter of praise to themselves to have such and such men heads of their schisme, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21. and upon this ground did despise and contemn one another. And the Apostle giveth this mark of Schismaticks and Sectaries, 2 *Tim.* 3. 2. *Men* (saith he) *shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud*, &c. and the followers of the false Prophetesse *Jezebel*, did despise the Orthodox as ignorant dolts, uncapable of the high mysteries and spiritualities of the Gospel, which indeed were nothing but the deeps of Sathans delusions, *Rev.* 2. 24.

The sixth effect or sign of delusion, is rash, prepostorous and bastard zeal: This the Apostle did mark in the mis-believing Jews, *Rom.* 10. 2. *They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge*, saith he. This prepostorous and rash zeal is far more firy and hot then true zeal in the godly: for, the error for which the deluded do strive, is the native brood of corrupt nature; and therefore it hath corrupt reason and affection stout for

it, and no wonder that corrupt nature be ſtrong to defend and advance its own birth. But true zeal is much more moderate; partly, becauſe it is carried on with knowledge and prudence, doth fear to offend God by yielding to paſſions, and hath to ſtrive againſt corrupt nature which cloggeth and hindereth every grace in the convert, and this amongſt the reſt. 2. This prepoſterous and baſtard zeal, doth render the deluded perſon too pertinacious in the defence of the error wherewith he is overtaken, that rather then he will quite his error, he will imbrace another error to maintain the former error for which he doth contend. And this cometh to paſſe, partly, by a ſort of neceſſity, and partly, by corrupt willfulneſſe. Partly of neceſſity, I ſay, becauſe one abſurd error being received, draweth after it many other errors: for, it is impoſſible to defend one error in religion, but by broaching and maintaining moe errors. I ſay partly, by corrupt willfulneſſe, becauſe when the deluded perſon findeth himſelf in diſpute intangled, ſo as he muſt either renounce the error which he hath imbraced, or receive and maintain another error which followeth thereon, he chooſeth rather to imbrace the error which followeth upon his firſt error, wherein he was firſt inſnared. 3. Holy zeal loveth every truth, yea loveth other points of truth, as much as it loveth that particular doctrine of truth which diſcovers the error; neither will it ſuffer a believer, for the defence of any point of doctrine, to paſſe from another truth; but prepoſterous and baſtard zeal is contrair: for, if many points of truth come in compariſon and competition with the error which the deluded man hath drunken in, he will miſ-regard them all rather then forſake his error, albeit he profeſſe other truths to be more precious and neceſſar then his erroneous tenet. A proof of this we have in the Phariſees, who made the great things of the Law of none effect, for upholding of their own traditions, *Mat.* 15.6. And the ſame power of deluſion may be ſeen among Papiſts, who will not ſo hotly

purſue

purſue or puniſh ſo ſeverely the breach of Gods commandments, as they do purſue and puniſh the neglect of ſuperſtitious ceremonies. 4. Prepoſterous and baſtard zeal, is very buſie to ſpread and propagat an error, by all means, venting falſe doctrine. And ſuch mens ſpeeches do ſpread as a gangren, 2 *Tim.* 2. 17. and a little leaven of this kind is ready to leaven the whole lump, *Gal.* 5. 9. In which caſe Chriſt advertiſed and exhorted his diſciples to beware of the leaven of the Phariſees, where by they were about to leaven the whole Church. And this furious zeal, as experience hath taught, doth ſpare no pains or labour to draw on moe and moe to the profeſſion of the zealots errors, as may be obſerved in Phariſees who compaſſed ſea and land to make proſelyts, *Math.* 23. 15. 5. This baſtard zeal of deluded perſons, carrieth them to have reſpect unto, and eſtimation of, them that embrace their error, and to ſeek reſpect and eſtimation from them who are overtaken with their error. This was evident in the ſchiſme of the Corinthians, of whom ſome did chooſe to be called ſuch mens diſciples, other ſome did chooſe to be called the diſciples of another man, and all did glory in their leaders, 1 *Cor.* 3. 5. 21. And on the other hand, the heads of the ſchiſme did glory in the multitude and excellency as they conceived of their diſciples. This the Apoſtle obſerved in the ſeducers of the Galatians, and in them that were ſeduced by them, *Gal.* 4. 17. *They zealouſly affect you but not well, yea they would exclude you* (from communion with God & us his Apoſtles) *that you might affect them.* 6. This baſtard zeal of the deluded, doth drive them to diſdain and contemn all them who oppugn their error, yea and to hate them, as experience did ſhew among the Corinthians: for ſo ſoon as ſchiſmes did ariſe in *Corinth*, diſſentions alſo did ariſe, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. and 2 *Cor.* 12. 20. and of this evil the Apoſtle doth complain, *Gal.* 4. 16. *Am I become your enemy, becauſe I tell you the truth?* And this much may ſerve for our purpoſe concerning the effects and ſigns of deluſion.

Queſt. 3. The third queſtion is, what are the cauſes of deluſion? For anſwer, the cauſes are many and various; for ſome cauſes are principal cauſes, ſome ſubſervient, ſome meritorious cauſes, and ſome promoveing and helping forward of this evil: All which cauſes and inſtruments, God doth ſo over-rule in his juſtice, power and wiſdom, that he turneth all to his own glory, and welfare of his Church: This we learn from the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1, 2. Now (ſaith he) *the Spirit ſpeaketh expreſly, that in the latter times ſome ſhall depart from the faith, giving head to ſeducing ſpirits, and doctrines of devils, ſpeaking lies in hypocriſie, having their conſcience ſeared with an hot iron, forbidding to marry, and to abſtain from meats which God hath created to be received,* &c. Where, firſt, he foretells, that there ſhall be a departing from the doctrine of the Apoſtles, whereof he giveth an inſtance of that which might ſeem furtheſt from ſuſpicion of deluſion, to wit, a putting of a religious reſtraint upon the uſe of things lawfull in themſelves, as marriage and meats. The authors of this deluſion, 1. he points forth to be lying ſpirits, and men ſeduced by a lying ſpirit. 2. The way of ſeduction he foretells, ſhall be by lyes ſpoken in groſſe hypocriſie. 3. Leſt any ſhould wonder how this could come to paſſe, that any man againſt his conſcience ſhould dare to ſpeak lyes, he points at the cauſe procuring, to wit, the ſtupidity and ſenſleſſeneſſe of the conſcience, they have their conſcience ſeared with a hot iron. And, 2 *Cor.* 11. 14, 15. ſpeaking of deluded ſeducers of the people, *Such are falſe apoſtles* (ſaith he) *deceitfull workers, transforming themſelves into the Apoſtles of Chriſt. And no marvel, for Sathan himſelf is transformed into an Angel of light.* Where among ſundry wayes of deceiving, he points forth one of Sathans ſtratagemes, to tempt men to make a ſhew of piety and counterfeit appearance of holy zeal, and to pretend the authority of God, to delude the ſimple. By which deluſion, whoſoever are inſnared they are ready to put on the ſame coat; for, being deceived, they deceive

deceive others, pretending Scripture, that they may fight againſt Scripture; and pretending holineſſe and piety, that they may hinder in others the true exerciſe of holineſſe.

As to the cauſes of ready embracing of errors, 1. there is propenſion abundant in the natural corruption of the heart to lay hold on any error offered, *Jer.* 17. 9. *The heart is deceitfull above all things, and deſperatly wicked, who can know it?* Another cauſe is pointed forth by Chriſt, *Mat.* 22. 29. *You erre, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* A third cauſe is the want of mortification; for the Apoſtle doth reckon hereſies and ſchiſmes among the works of the fleſh; and in particular, 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. *The love of money is the root of all evil, which while ſome have coveted after, they have erred from the faith.* And concerning the inſtruments of deluſion and diviſion in the Church, the ſentence of the holy Spirit doth ſtand ſure: for he knoweth the evils of the heart perfectly, *Rom.* 16. 18. *They that are ſuch, ſerve not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own belly; and by good words and fair ſpeeches, they deceive the hearts of the ſimple.* Of ſuch men *Jude* ſpeaketh, *ver.* 20. *Theſe are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own luſts,* &c.

As for paſſive deluſion in ſeduced people, the Apoſtle propheſieth, 2 *Tim.* 4. 3, 4. *The time will come when they will not endure ſound doctrine, but after their own luſts ſhall they heap to themſelves teachers, having itching ears; and they ſhall turn away their ears from the truth, and ſhall be turned unto fables.* In which words he holdeth forth the meritorious and adjuvant cauſes of paſſive deluſion, *their luſts*, their turning away from ſound doctrine, their itching ears, and deſire to hear flatterers, who by falſe doctrine may foſter them in their luſts, and making choyce of ſuch men to be their Paſtors. From this ſort of teachers Chriſt fore-warneth his diſciples to keep off, *Mat.* 17. 15. *Beware of falſe prophets which come to you in ſheeps cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves, ye ſhall know them by their fruits.* Their outward

behaviour and converſation will not decipher them, for they will ſeem innocent and harmleſſe lambs, but their doctrine which is the fruits of their teaching and the proper work of the miniſtery, ſhall find them out: But the meritorious cauſe of this giving men over to be deluded, is plainly ſet down, 2 *Theſſ.* 2, 10, 11. *Becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved, for this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion.* This judgment, albeit it purſues unto the death only the reprobat, yet whiles in ſome degree for a time, it may over-take the elect and renewed perſons, becauſe ſome of them, ſometime are found to give way to their luſts, and not to take head to the truth which by Gods bleſſing might kill theſe luſts, therefore God in his juſtice ſuffereth them to be infected with a contrary error, and to eat the bitter fruits of their folly, that being corrected they may repent, and for ever fall out with their carnall luſts and reject the error whereby they were infected: for God in his wiſdom and juſtice, moſt holily and powerfully, doth ſo rule the whole exerciſe of his elect, that truth ſhall have no loſs, but be the more cleared, and no elect ſoul periſh, as Chriſt giveth aſſurance, ſpeaking of the efficacie and power of deluſion by the doctrine of falſe chriſts, *Mat.* 24. 24 *There ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts and falſe prophets, and ſhall ſhew great ſigns and wonders, in ſo much that (if it were poſſible) they ſhall deceive the very elect.* This is alſo manifeſt by what the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 11. 18, 19. where he declares, that God hath decreed to permit hereſies to ariſe, that both the truth oppugned by the hereſie, and the true converts, may be made the more manifeſt: for by this means, the luſts and wickedneſſe of ſome, is brought to light; ſome are chaſtiſed, ſome periſh juſtly, ſome have their weakneſſe and folly diſcovered, by being tainted with error for a time, and in their recovery out of the hereſie, the grace and power of God is made more evident: and in theſe who ſhall ſuffer for refuſing or reſiſting hereſie, God ſhall make manifeſt

manifest (for stopping the mouth of Sathan and all calumniators) that truth is more precious to his sincere disciples, then goods, or lands, or liberty or life, or whatsoever can befall them in this mortall life for adhereing to truth; and of this many martyrs are sufficient proofs in all ages:

The remedy of this fearfull condition.

ALbeit this deluſion draweth the reprobat when they are over-taken with it, unto certain perdition, as the Apoſtle (2 *Theſſ.* 2. 10, 11.) expreſly doth teach; and albeit this fearfull plague be hardly curable, when it falleth on the elect: partly, by reaſon of the deep roots of carnall luſts in them, which open the way unto error; partly, by reaſon of the ſubtile ſophiſtry of ſeducers, whereby honeſt ſouls are intangled; partly, by reaſon of new tentations ſuggeſted againſt returning to the truth whereſrom they are ſlidden; and partly, by reaſon of the difficulty of coming forth from the bonds of temporal judiciall hardneſſe of heart, whereby God hath chaſtiſed his child for harbouring ſuch luſts in himſelf as made way for the error: yet the cure of deluſion is not deſperat, for the Apoſtle giveth good hope of poſſible and certain recovery out of it: for, *Gal.* 5. 10. *I have confidence in you* (ſaith he to the inſnared Galatians) *through the Lord, that you will be no otherwayes minded, but he that troubleth you ſhall bear his judgment, whoſoever he be.*

1. For preveening and curing of this evil, the Apoſtle commandeth Paſtors to hold forth to all ſound doctrine, *to preach the Word and to be inſtant upon all occaſions, in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-ſuffering and doctrine,* 1 Tim. 4. 6. *and* 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2.

2. Let the deluded perſon be diſputed with, that by arguments drawn from Scripture he may be convinced, as the Apoſtle dealt with theſe who denyed the reſurrection, 1 *Cor.* 15. and with theſe who ſought to be juſtified by works among the Galatians.

3. Let the deluded be exhorted to examine accurately his own conſcience, how he ſtandeth affected to his own carnal wiſdom and earthly luſts; for if he be proud in the conceit of his own wiſdom, power or holineſſe, or any gift he hath received, or be led by the luſt of the eye, luſt of the fleſh or pride of life, and conſult to God by prayer to ſolve his doubts, or to teach him the right way, he ſhall receive ſuch an anſwer as *Balaam* received, and ſuch as the Lord threateneth to give, *Ezek.* 14. 2, 3, 4. &c, for he hath by his luſts deceived his own conſcience, and made it a flatterer of himſelf when it ſhould have been a grave counſellor being well informed.

4. Let the deluded perſon be exhorted to be humbled for the ſins which he granteth to be in himſelf, and flye to Chriſt for pardon, pity and help againſt his own known corruptions, making uſe of all Chriſts offices in the ſenſe and acknowledgment of his ſtanding in need of the benefits thereof daily; for if he do not repent known ſins, but go on in them againſt the light of his conſcience, how ſhall he expect that God ſhall give him light in his doubts, or errors, who maketh no uſe, or an ill uſe, of the light he hath? and if he be in a courſe of grieving the Spirit of the Lord, and make no uſe of the grace that is offered in Chriſt, how is it poſſible that he who doth not follow Chriſt, ſhould eſhew to walk in darkneſſe?

5. And laſt of all, let the party deluded conſider how from time to time, and moſt evidently in this time wherein we live, God hath puniſhed the luſts and ſinfull practices of profeſſed Chriſtians, with giving them over to their own hearts luſts, and letting them not only walk in their own counſells, and in the imaginations of their own ill hearts, but alſo in his juſtice, ſending to them ſtrong deluſions, and falſe teachers to authorize their errors, and hold them on in the way to perdition. What wonder to ſee God for the light eſteeming of baptiſme beſtowed on men in their infancy,

cy, and the not making use thereof for mortification of lusts and sanctification of life by faith in Jesus Christ, to let loose phanatick Anabaptists, to teach men to renounce their baptisme? What wonder to see mens loose-living in the service of their sensual lusts, punished with letting loose antichristian Antinomians, who turning the grace of God in wantonnesse, do avouch whatsoever they do, it is no sin, and that they are not bound to keep the law, which Christ professeth he came not to dissolve, but by the contrary to establish it? What wonder to see mens carnal confidence in their own wit, worth, strength and ability, works and merits, punished with letting loose lying spirits to harden them in their error? And what wonder to see God punishing the abuse of the Gospel, and refusing to receive the truth in love with giving men over to the spirit of Antichrist and strong delusions, 2 *Thess.* 2. The patrons and propagators of such errors and delusions are called by the Apostle, ministers of Sathan and false brethren, 2 *Cor.* 11. 16. deceivers, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. and men who were of old ordained to this condemnation. From whose contagion and punishment, let every misled soul pray to God to be delivered.

CHAP. VIII.

Concerning the converts conscience, mistaking vice for vertue, and pleasing himself in this condition.

THis case differeth from the case of delusion, which we have taken for erring in the mater of Religion, whether doctrine or worship, pertaining to the first table of the Law; but this mistaking conscience is in the practice of duties of the second table, when the doctrine of the duty is confessed, but in practice and action, vice is practised under the notion and pretense of vertue, and the man is pleased with himself in so doing. Whereof it shall suffice to give three instances.

The

The first instance.

THe first instance wherein a convert may be for a time mistaken, is, when a man pleaseth himself in nigardly parcimony, and narrow scraping together of mony to the hinderance of spiritual duties, under pretense of frugality and diligence in his calling, *&c.* Whereby he perswadeth himself, that his practice is so far from sin, as it is rather commendable and worthy to be imitat, for he conceiveth that according to Gods command he is not slow in the work of the Lord, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, *Rom.* 12. 11. that he is working with his hands that which is good, *Ephes.* 4. 18. that he is providing for the necessity of his family, for which if he should not provide, he should be worse then an infidel, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. If the mater were found so to be after examination, true it is, frugality, diligence in a lawfull calling, and provision for a mans family, are commendable; but here is the deceit of the heart found, when anxiety is found in stead of moderat carefulnesse; when hasting to be rich is found, in stead of moderat diligence in his calling; when love of money and avarice is found, in stead of honest provision for a mans family. We grant also, that this mistake is not easily discerned by beholders, but yet the convert himself, after examination, may discern it, when he looketh upon the effects, signs and concomitant evils, such as are felt impediments, and hinderances of a spiritual disposition: for, this covetousnesse of things earthly, whereof we are speaking, doth marr the study and endeavour for things spiritual, and diminisheth the fear of sinning in the mater of gain, and taketh up the time due for spiritual exercise. In this case, carnal joy in the getting gain, is a sign and evidence of a deceived heart, and so is also worldly grief for want of successe, or for not getting expected and desired gain, a proof of this mistaking.

The

The cauſes of this evil, are the too great fear of poverty, an over-high eſtimation of riches, a diffidence of Gods providence, a doubting of Gods promiſes to furniſh his own with food and raiment, and things neceſſary for this temporal life: which diffidence Chriſt doth expreſly diſcharge, *Mat. 6. 24, 25.* But for a remedy of this evil, the perſon guilty cannot ſeek after, nor embrace it ſo long as he is not convinced of his ſinfull condition; wherefore, for clearing a mans mind in this point, let him examine himſelf whether in following gain his heart be oft-times ſurfetted and overcharged with the cares of this life, and made frequently indiſpoſed for prayer and religious exerciſes, whether he be too much taken with gladneſſe when he gaineth, and grief when he ſuffereth loſs and worldly damage, whether he uſeth, for hope of gain or fear of life, to lye and flatter, or dare deal injuſtly in his bargains, whether he findeth himſelf ſlow unto exerciſes of religion, but prompt and ready for ſecular affairs? whether he ſpend the time heavily in religious exerciſes, and is weary of them, but can paſſe the time pleaſantly in the affairs of this life? If he find himſelf convinced by ſhrewd ſigns of this evil, let him humble himſelf in Gods ſight, flye unto Chriſt for faſtening his bargain for righteouſneſſe and eternal life through Chriſt; then let him not caſt off his diligence in and faithfull diſcharge of his lawfull calling, but by a religious diſpoſition of mind, and obſervance of all religious exerciſes ſeaſonably, temper and moderat his diligence in ſecular affairs, and depend upon God more then he hath done for the ſucceſſe of his labours, and take from God loſs or advantage as he giveth it, ſo as he may be found in proſperity and adverſity ſubmiſſive unto God and ready for the diſcharge of charity and equity, as occaſion ſhall offer.

Another inſtance.

THere is another inſtance, wherein a convert may be miſtaken, to wit, when a man pleaſeth himſelf in the proſecution of privat revenge, that he may pay home to ſuch as have wronged him in the mater of his credit and reputation, or in his goods, or bodily harm done to him or his friends: for, this ungodly diſpoſition he may pretend poſſibly, a care of following retributive juſtice, wherein he may ſeem to himſelf to come ſhort, except he ſhould watch for a recompence-giving to the perſon injurious; he may poſſibly pretend a dutifull reſpect to publick peace and welfare of the commonwealth, of the ſociety wherein he liveth, wherein he may ſeem to himſelf to come ſhort if he ſhould ſuffer the perſon injurious to him to go away unpuniſhed; he may pretend alſo his own ſafety and ſecurity for time to come, whereof he may ſeem to himſelf careleſſe except he make it evident, that whoſoever doth him wrong ſhall be made ſenſible of his injury done; he may pretend that the glory of God requireth ſo much, that ſins ſhould be puniſhed, the avenging whereof, if it ſhould be delayed longer then occaſion of revenge ſhould offer, or till the Magiſtrat ſhould take notice of it, no puniſhment ſhould fall upon the injurious at all; and laſt of all, he may pretend the good of the party injurer, who by feeling the ſmart of his wrong done may be led to repentance, and made to learn by his ſuffering the recompence of his injury done, to carry himſelf more equitably toward his neighbours in all time coming. All theſe pretenſes may bear weight in the corrupt inclination of a convert, and may harden him in his ſinfull courſe of ſeeking a privat revenge on the perſon who hath injured him. And his corrupt inclination may be obſerved by himſelf, 1. by the ſtirring of his paſſion and wrath againſt the injurer, whenſoever he doth ſee the party injurer or call the injury to mind. 2. By diſſimulation

on and hiding from all men the ſenſe he hath of the wrong received, till he find an occaſion offered to be avenged on him. 3. By a ſtop made in his own prayer for remiſſion of ſins, by his conſcience telling him, he could not ſubſcribe the condition put in the prayer for remiſſion of ſin by Chriſt, which is *forgive us our ſins, as we alſo forgive them that ſin againſt us.*

The cauſes of this ſinfull condition are, 1. corrupt and unmortified carnal ſelf-love, with a too high eſtimation of himſelf in pride, which maketh the injury ſeem ſo much greater as he hath a higher eſtimation of himſelf. 2. A defect in his chriſtian love, meekneſſe, long-ſuffering, patience and pity, which ſhould have their exerciſe ſpecially in caſes of provocation of our unmortified affections. 3. The oblivion of the commands of God, and of the manyfold ſins daily committed againſt him, whereof if there were a due eſtimation had, the fountain and courſe of carnal revenge, ſhould ſoon be ſtopped, that privat and carnal revenge ſhould not break forth.

When theſe evils are found out and acknowledged by the convert in himſelf, the main remedy thereof is in and by Chriſt, who hath died for us when we were his enemies, *Rom.* 5. 8. and for whoſe cauſe greater ſins againſt God, are daily forgiven to us, then are the injuries done unto us by men. 2. In this caſe alſo, the grave admonition of the Apoſtle ſhould not be forgotten, *Epheſ.* 4. 26, 27. *Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath; niether give place to the devil*: Giving us to underſtand, that if wrath, which draweth with it the deſire of revenge, ſhall lodge all night with a man, the devil will lodge with it alſo, ſtirring the man up to purſue a revenge whenſoever he findeth opportunity.

A third inſtance.

A third inſtance of this poſſible miſtake of a convert, may be found, when he pleaſeth himſelf in his carriage too much for his own carnal ſatisfaction in meat,

meat, drink, apparrel and recreations, and here he may be hardened by ſundry pretenſes which he may have for his exceſſe in the uſe of things otherwayes lawfull. As, 1. that what he ſpendeth upon himſelf is of his own means. 2. That his recreations are lawfull and allowed unto him of God. 3. That in all this he hath a care of his health. 4. That he doth not ſpend more upon himſelf then his rent and ability may well bear. 5. That God hath ſaid, by the mouth of a wiſe King, that this courſe which he doth follow in allowing on himſelf, is the gift of God, *Eccleſ.* 5. 19. And laſt of all, that he might ſeem juſtly a nigard, if he did not well to himſelf when he is able ſo to do; and here are pretenſes abundant. But if after examination of a mans own ſelf, he ſhall find the aboundance of earthly things weakening his deſire after things ſpiritual, or ſhall find the ſenſe of his in-born corruption laid over to ſleep in his proſperity, or ſhall find his fleſh wax wanton againſt the ſpirit, and to prevail in the conflict: or ſhall find his compaſſion toward the poor and afflicted to grow cold, and his delight in things ſpirtual much diminiſhed, or ſhall find too great a ſhare and portion of his time beſtowed upon his body, and but little time beſtowed upon the care of his ſoul, a wakened conſcience may eaſily convince the convert, that maters are not ſo right with him as he ſuppoſed.

The remedy of this evil, is not for a man to turn unto another extremity, and to a contrary vice, as if there were no place for a wiſe moderation, or as if at ſometimes a more liberal uſe of the creature were not allowed unto men, or as if a ſpiritual diſpoſition of a mans ſpirit, could not conſiſt now and then with any banquet or feſtivity: for, it is plain from Scripture, that there is a time to feaſt, and a time to faſt, a time to labour and a time to be refreſhed, both in body and mind after labour. In which prudence, the Apoſtle had not a little advanced, when he ſaith, *Phil.* 4. 12, 13. *I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound, every*

every where and in all things I am inſtructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and ſuffer need: I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me. But here is the remedy, 1. that diſtruſting our ſelves, and fearing the ſnares which Sathan layeth for us in all things we have our converſation with Chriſt, and ſet our affections on things which are above, as the Apoſtle giveth direction, 1 *Col.* 3. 1, 2. Next, that we watch againſt the luſts of the fleſh, leaſt at any time our hearts be ſurfetted with meat or drink, or any thing which is pleaſant to the fleſh, *Luk.* 21.34. *Rom.* 13.14. For we are not debters to the fleſh, to fulfill the luſts thereof, *Rom.* 8. 12. but are bound ſo to care for our bodies, ſo as our ſouls have no loſs thereby; for, the luſts of the fleſh do fight againſt our ſouls, 2 *Pet.* 2. 11. And to this end, let the admonition of the Apoſtle be well remembred, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30, 31. *This I ſay, brethren, the time is ſhort, it remaineth that both they who have wives be as though they have none, and they that weep as though they weept not, and they that rejoyce as though they rejoyced not, and they that buy as though they poſſeſſed not, and they that uſe this world as not abuſing it: for the faſhion of this world paſſeth away.*

Many moe inſtances might be given, but theſe may ſuffice our purpoſe, who mind only to give ſome taſte of caſes of conſcience in ſome examples, which may give light unto other like caſes as they fall in.

CHAP. IX.

Of the caſe of conſcience, dealing treacherouſly under pretenſe of liberty of conſcience.

PRevarication or treacherous dealing, is ſtrictly taken, when for a bud or bribe the conſcience doth betray the cauſe which it ſhould defend: and it is borrowed from the unfaithfull advocat, who for a bribe doth ſell the cauſe which he pretends to defend, and give over the plea of his client, and falleth in to the adverſe

verse party. Such is the man whose affection to some lust and worldly advantage, doth blind-fold his conscience and moveth it to speak contrary to its duty, and mean time doth pretend he is only following the light of his conscience, for whose liberty he ought to dispute; the mater may be seen in an example or instance one or two: King *Saul* receives a command from God to slay all the Amalekits and destroy them and their beasts; when it cometh to execution, *Saul* conceiveth it shall be for his honour to spare *Agag* and reserve him for a triumph, and that it should be for his advantage to spare the fatteſt of the cattel, whereof the people might make use for sacrifice; So advantage and honour do sollicit him. The peoples consent who followed him, helpeth on his resolution to spare *Agag* and the fatteſt of the cattel: fear to offend the people whom he had drawn on to consent unto his mind, concurreth to the giving forth his decreet, contrary to Gods command; and so his conscience being bribed, faileth against the command of God. In which resolution and practice *Saul* doth please himself.

The like treachery in *Saul* falleth forth in the mater of the Gibeonits: The Gibeonits preserved from *Joshuas* time, did grow in number to the detriment of the Israelits as he conceived, the oath of a covenant sworn for sparing their lives standeth up on the one hand to hinder him from slaying of them, the advantage which his kindly subjects might have by killing them and possessing their lands and goods, standeth up to intise him to kill them, on the other hand: *Saul* being taken with the bait of advantage and honour from the people of *Israel*, for whom he was zealous, inclineth his conscience to mis-regard the oath of the covenant, partly because it was given without Gods counsel and consent, yea contrary to his positive command, discharging a covenant with the Canaanits; partly because the Gibeonits deceived *Joshua* and the elders, and fained themselves not to be of the number of the Canaanits, but

men

men of a far country; partly becauſe many years had interveened between the day of *Joſhua*'s covenant with them and his time, and it ſeemed unto *Saul* very unreaſonable, that a raſh and unadviſed oath ſhould be ſtill in force from generation to generation; and partly alſo becauſe the form of the civil Government was now changed, whereby *Saul* conceiving himſelf not to be obliged as ſucceſſor to the Judges, but as King ordained at Gods ſpecial direction, as free a Monarch as any in the world, and not bound by the oath of the raſh ſwearing Judges and Elders in *Joſhuas* time, doth treacherouſly ſeduce his own conſcience, and falleth upon the off-cutting of the Gibeonits by the ſword. How many are they who by ſuch intiſements, having deceived their own hearts, and for worldly gain or glory, or for eſhewing of damnage, do embrace errors in religion, and follow that courſe which moſt ſerveth to ſatisfie their own luſts, or is moſt applauded unto of them who are in power? From which ſort of treacherous dealing nothing can divert, and draw back the man to repentance, except the Lord partly by diſputation, and partly by Church-cenſures and civil puniſhments, ſhall diſcover unto them their treacherous dealing in ſelling the truth and betraying their conſcience for baſe ends, and ſo bring them to repentance.

In this caſe, ſuch as are pretended maintainers of liberty of conſcience, but in effect patrons of licentious living after their own luſts, put in their objections.

1. *Obj.* It is neceſſary for me, ſaith one, to do what I do, and to think what I think; I conceive I have reaſon for me and am perſwaded that what I do and profeſſe is lawfull, and that that is not lawfull whereunto cenſures and puniſhments tend to draw me.

Anſ. What neceſſity can be pretended for a deliberat mans actions and profeſſion except a morall neceſſity of doing duty and of not ſinning? Natural neceſſity he cannot alledge for the juſtifying of deliberat ſinfull actions: For if he pretend original ſin and native corrupt

inclination to sin, it is no excuse for sin, but a granting himself a sinner by kind, by natural inclination and custom; or, if he pretend a civil necessity, it is either for hope of gain or fear of worldly loss, and that is but a base reason to move a man to do what is in it self sinfull. If conscience be pretended, and that he cannot without sin do what is against his conscience, he must know that a conscience mis-informed cannot warrant a sinfull tenet or practice: for except a man renounce the error which he hath embraced, both the error is his sin, and the profession and practice according to the error, doth make his sin double; if he pretend, that except he do as his conscience biteth unto him, he sinneth, because the conscience is the rule of a mans actions, he must know, that the conscience is not the absolute rule of a mans actions, but the Word of God must be the rule of his conscience and of his actions also. Because if he put his conscience in the place of Gods Word, and not in subjection and subordination thereto, he must justifie the murtherers of the Martyrs, of whom Christ giveth warning, that they who kill his servants shall think (to wit in their conscience) that they do unto God good service, *Joh.* 16. 2. If he pretend, that upon this ground, liberty of conscience is altogether destroyed, if men living under civil and ecclesiastick Government, must renounce the light of their conscience and give obedience to mens commandments, he must know, that he is mistaken, and that the true liberty of the conscience standeth in the following Gods Word, and doing service unto God. Neither doth sound doctrine tye any man to renounce the liberty of his conscience, but to renounce the error which hath blinded him, and to renounce his lust which hath opened the door unto the error which hath misled him, lest both he perish in his sin, and the society wherein he liveth be infected with the error, and fall under the wrath of God. If he pretend, that neither the will of a man, nor his conscience can be compelled:

led: For, the nature of the conſcience and will, is to determine freely what the man ſhall do; and the Lords people muſt be a willing people, *Pſ.* 110. 3 He muſt know, that albeit the will and conſcience cannot be compelled, yet the carnal luſts which have ſeduced the conſcience, may be croſſed and curbed by eccleſiaſtick cenſures and civil puniſhments, that the conſcience and will, being better informed, after the diſcovery of the deceitfulneſſe of their luſts, which did miſlead them, they may freely diſclaim the error, & their unhappy venting thereof. If he pretend, that God is the only Lord of the Conſcience, and no man may take upon him that power to preſcrib unto, and command another mans conſcience, let him know that God indeed is the only Lord of the conſcience, and becauſe he is Lord, therefore hath he appointed his Miniſters to teach men the truth, and to preſſe the diſobedient members of the viſible Church with cenſures; and hath put the ſword in the Magiſtrats hand to ſee his will done, and to puniſh ſuch as refuſe to give obedience to his commands, that ſo obedience may be procured to God the only Lord of the conſcience, In which caſe albeit the acts commanded by the will and conſcience, are curbed and reſtrained, yet the will and conſcience, is not compelled, but is brought to a better determination of its own elicit acts, that having obtained a clearer light about its duty, it may command the outward man to ſay & do what is right. If he pretend, that religion is not to be propagat and preſs'd by force, but by the word preached, and hereſies are to be rooted out, not by the ſword but by the power of truth holden forth to the heretick, let him know, that there is a difference between propagation of religion among Pagans, or people not under the charge of the civil Magiſtrat, or Church Judicatories, and the preſervation or purgation of religion among them that are within the viſible Church, and under the power of the civil Magiſtrat.

For albeit the only way to bring religion in requeſt among heathen nations and ſtrangers to the covenant of

promiſes, be that way which the Apoſtles did follow, preaching the Goſpel to all, and receiving ſuch as embraced the Goſpel into Church-fellowſhip, yet the Magiſtrat, having civil dominion over heathen Idolatets, may after information of them by the Preachers of the Goſpel, break their Idols and aboliſh them, and reſtrain them from doing contempt unto the true Religion, or abuſing of the Sabbath, as the fourth command of the moral law doth give warrant; yea, and may compell them to uſe the means whereby they may be inſtructed in the true Religion. Again, let him know there is a difference between dealing with Pagans and ſtrangers from the commonwealth of *Iſrael*, and dealing with theſe who have given up their names unto Chriſt, have entered in covenant with God, and by baptiſme have conſecrat themſelves and their children unto the faith, worſhip and obedience of God, and do profeſſe the chriſtian Religion, and yet go about by their errors and practices to corrupt and over-turn the true Religion and faith of others among whom they live: for, ſuch may and ſhould be not only inſtructed by Sermon, conference and diſpute, but alſo puniſhed by the civil Magiſtrate for their deceiving of the people, and troubling the flocks of Chriſt, *Deut.* 13. and *Rom.* 13. If he pretend, that Church-cenſures and civil puniſhments can ſerve for nothing but to make men diſſemblers and hypocrits in the mater of religion, which is moſt odious in the ſight of God and wiſe men, let him know, that every hypocrit ſhall bear his own iniquity: Eccleſiaſtick cenſures and civil puniſhments concern the words and deeds of the outward man, that they may be ordered ſo as Religion and the peace of the Kingdom may not ſuffer detriment. If any man ſay and do that which is right in hypocriſie and diſſimulation, the ſociety wherein he liveth is ſafe; but for his hypocriſie let the diſſembler anſwer to God for it. And yet it is not to be preſumed, that all who by cenſures, and fear of civil puniſhments do forſake error and embrace

brace truth, are dissemblers and hypocrits in so doing, because they are means appointed of God for curbing and reclaiming erroneous persons, wherewith he giveth his blessing when it pleaseth him: for by censures and civil punishments, the allurements which have enduced them to error are cut off, such as are applause of men, vain glory, worldly advantage, sensual pleasure, and such like, wherein the erroneous have been taken as in an evil net, which being broken, the insnared captive may come freely off his error, and embrace the truth, and take in good part the censures and civil punishment which drew him out of the snare into the right way: As we are assured by the prophesie of *Zechariah*, chap. 13. 6. *And one shall say* (to wit, to the converted sectary) *what are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer*, those *with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.* But whether by those means the erroneous be reclaimed heartily or in dissimulation, respect must be had to Gods commands and his peoples good, by curbing of vice and error, according as God hath given power to the Church and to the civil Magistrat, *Rom.* 13. 3, 4. *who is appointed the minister of God for the peoples good.*

If he shall object, that he who chargeth him for his error, is no lesse subject to error, then he whom he chargeth, yea, that Governours ecclesiastick and civil are no more exeemed from the danger of erring, then privat persons, yea, that the determinations of Synods and Councils are not infallible, yea, that he is perswaded the error he is charged of, is no error, but not perswaded of the truth which the reformers of him pretend unto. Let him know that the force of this objection doth assert, that truth and righteousnesse is settled upon the mis-perswaded sectaries part, and that the Church and Magistrat who findeth fault with him, hath nothing to perswade them of the truth, which they do presse upon the sectary, and so cannot condemn or punish him; but he must know, that it is one thing to

ſay *ohe may erre* in the latiude of a poſſiblity indefinit, another, to ſay *one doth erre* in ſuch a particular wherein he hath the light of Scripture and reaſon clear for him. The ſectary will not deny he may erre, but he will maintain that in ſuch one or other article of his profeſſion he doth not erre. Shall he maintain his plea, that he doth not erre in ſuch a point of error? and ſhall not the Magiſtrat and Church maintain their plea, that they do not erre in puniſhing ſuch an obſtinat erroneous perſon? Chriſt hath committed the keyes of doctrine and diſcipline to his Church, that privat perſons may know Chriſts will by the miniſtery of the Church, except he will be holden for an heathen or publican, *Mat.* 18. 17. He hath alſo committed the power of the ſword unto the Magiſtrat, who doth not bear the ſword in vain, *Rom.* 13. And therefore let the Church and Magiſtrat do their duty, and let erroneous perſons ceaſe to ſtumble the Lords people by their error and practice, and ſuffer themſelves to be brought in order by ſuch as have commiſſion and power to move them by cenſures and civil puniſhment thereunto.

If ſtill he will inſiſt and alledge, that by this means a Chriſtian by cenſures and civil puniſhment, is compelled to ſin againſt his conſcience, let him know, that a ſcandalous ſectary or licentious libertine, is not compelled at all to ſin, but to ſay and do that which is right and to hearken to the Word of God rather then to his own erring conſcience: for the ſcandalous ſectary, ſchiſmatick or heretick lyeth in a twofold ſin, the one is in his ſpirit, believing and embracing an error, the other in his external words and deeds corrupting the minds and maners of Gods people. If after conference and diſputation, the ſin of his miſled mind cannot be taken away, yet the correcting of him by Church-cenſures and civil puniſhment may reſtrain and bind him up from troubling, and infecting others with his leaven and ill example; and ſo his ſinning externally is cut off, and he made in ſo far to ceaſe from

evil;

evil: wherein he doth not ſin in ſo far, becauſe ſin is not every tranſgreſſion of the ditement of the conſcience ſimply, but the tranſgreſſion of the law, and ditement of the conſcience ſpeaking according to the law, is a ſin. It is true indeed, that whoſoever doth judge the ditement of his conſcience to be the Law of God, and yet doth the contrary, muſt by interpretation of his deed be holden guilty of ſin, becauſe he who by fear or hope can be moved to do contrary to the ditement of his erring conſcience, in effect doth profeſſe he may be moved by hope or fear to do contrary to the ditement of his conſcience well informed. Mean time it is expedient, not only for the good of the ſociety of Gods people, but alſo for the good of the erroneous perſon himſelf, that he be curbed and hindered, by theſe that have lawfull power, from doing yet more harm, and reſtrained from following the courſe of ſin and filling up the full meaſure of ſinning, which he was about to do.

CHAP. X.

Of ſuch as do pleaſe themſelves in a condition not pleaſing God, becauſe they conceive they can pray well under any condition.

SUndry there are, who think their ſouls to be in a good caſe and condition, when they can pray much, and that with freedom of ſpirit, when poſſibly they do not watch over their hearts, nor wayes as becometh them.

This ſickneſſe even converts are ſubject unto ſundry times, but it may be moſt clearly ſeen in thoſe, who put a ſort of worth and merit in effect, upon their religious exerciſes, as we may ſee in many Iſraelits in *Iſaias* time, *chap.* 58. They did reckon themſelves among them that did ſeek God daily, who delighted in his wayes and did approach unto him, *ver.* 2. yet becauſe God did not grant their petitions, they fell on chiding him, *ver.* 3. *Wherefore have we faſted* (ſay they) *and*

thou ſeeſt not? wherefore have we afflicted our ſouls and thou takeſt no knowledge? The hiſtory alſo of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram* is notour, wherein we ſee what eſteem *Korah* and his complices had of their own holineſſe, and of their acceſſe to God in their prayers, that they durſt hazard and lay their lives in pawn, that God ſhould make them as welcom when they came with their cenſeres to pray before him, as *Aaron* and *Moſes*, yea and more welcome then they.

Such a ſort of deceit is that whereby ſome fanaticks, enthuſiaſts and hereticks do foſter themſelves in their own folly, and imagine they are no ſmall men in Gods account, becauſe they find a ſort of eloquence in their prayers, which they conceive God would not give unto them, except he were well pleaſed with their perſons, prayers and wayes; and that the true convert alſo is ſubject to this ſickneſſe, appeareth by this that *Moſes* in charity judged many who countenanced the conſpiracy, to be godly perſons otherwayes, and therefore exhorted them to forſake the unhappy ſociety of theſe wicked men. And ſure it is, that ſundry of the ſons of *Korah* did repent and flye from the company of the obſtinat tranſgreſſors, for it is clear that all the ſons of *Korah* did not periſh, *Numb.* 26. 11. and frequent mention is made of the poſterity of *Korah* in the Chronicles and Pſalms.

But we need not inſiſt much here, ſeing experience teacheth, that many go on confidently in maintaining ſchiſme and error, perſwading themſelves of the goodneſſe of their courſe and condition, becauſe their prayers do flow according to their wiſh from day to day. And many are, who if they find fredom in prayer, for any particular concerning themſelves or others, do aſſure themſelves that it ſhall come to paſſe which they pray for: And if their ſpirits be ſtraitned in praying for ſpiritual and promiſed graces, they fear they ſhall not be ſatisfied in the particular they pray for.

For

For remedy of this self-deceit, men must know, that it is one thing to pray much, and another thing to be heard and their prayers and persons accepted. The Jews are told by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *chap.* 1. 15. that albeit they put up many petitions, the Lord will not hear them, because their hands were full of blood. 2. Carnal affection may easily creep in and stir up a fervency of prayer, *Jam.* 4. 3. *you ask and obtain not, because you ask amiss, that you may bestow what you pray for upon your lusts.* 3. Saints may pray earnestly for that which God is not minded to grant unto them, as *Samuel* prayed for *Saul*, that he might be continued King, 1 *Sam.* 16. 1. And *David* may pray for the life of *Bathshebas* child and not prevail. 4. On the other hand prayers put up from a straitened heart in a sad condition, may prove no lesse pleasing unto God then when the supplicant doth find most inlargement of spirit, and fredom of prayer. How oft did the Psalmist cry out of the deeps, when his spirit was overwhelmed within him, when darknesse and the cords of death did straiten him, as *Ps.* 61. 1. is holden forth? And the Apostle (*Rom.* 8.) giveth us to understand, that the spirit of the convert may be so straitened by afflictions bodily and spiritual, that they are not able to set their words in order before God, yea, nor have clear notions of their necessities and desires, but in stead of an oration, do sigh and groan unto God. Wherefore if a man shall in the sense of his sins and wants, have his daily recourse unto Christ, and be carefull to bring forth the fruits of the spirit, praying for what is promised, with submission to God what measure and at what time he pleaseth to give, he may be sure his person and prayers are acceptable, as we are taught, 1 *Joh.* 5. 14, 15. *This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the converts esteeming the peace of God to be but a carnal security.

WE have brought forth some examples of the first sort of the conscience erring, by esteeming an evil condition to be a good condition. Now let us look upon some examples of a conscience erring, by esteeming a good condition to be an evil condition. Of the which sort this shall be one.

Sometime some converts do mistake the peace of God granted unto them after hard exercise, and do esteem the quietnesse of their conscience, to be nothing else but a carnal security and sleepy disposition of the conscience. To which case that we may speak the more clearly, we do not deny that many are, who indeed fall in a carnal security and please themselves therein, conceiving they have the peace of God and a blessed quietnesse of conscience. Such persons have no doubt nor suspicion but all is well with them, for they do not examine and compare their condition and wayes with the Word of God, but sleep sweetly in their carnal security and negligence of spiritual duties, like to these luke-warm Laodiceans, *Rev.* 3. Of such we do not speak here. 2. Again we do not deny, that true converts are in danger to suffer the peace which God hath granted unto them, to degenerat unto a carnal security. For easily may a convert after consolation divine fall in a sleep, as the Spouse did in the *Canticle*, 5. 2. But we are speaking of the case of a convert, watching unto duties, who after no small vexation in his conflict with the tentations of the devil, with the terror of the law and sense of divine wrath, hath gotten the victory by faith in Christ, and hath obtained peace with God graciously granting his petition; we are speaking here of these converts who after the Lord hath granted peace unto them through faith in Christ,

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dare not injoy their peace, but do ſuſpect that their peace is not ſound, and at length do count and call it carnal ſecurity; and ſo do breed themſelves new troubles of mind. The pretenſe and ſeeming reaſon whereby they do deceive themſelves is this. When God, ſay they, ſeemed unto us angry with us, when we found no peace and were wreſtling under the ſenſe of ſin, and in doubt whether ſuch as we ſhould find mercy, then we did pray very earneſtly, night and day. then we were diligent in hearing and reading of the Word of God, and were painfull in the exerciſe of all duties of religion and obedience. But now we find our ſelves much cooled and ſlackened in all theſe duties, whereupon we juſtly ſuſpect the peace which we now do find, to be nothing elſe but a carnal ſecurity of a ſleeping conſcience. By this miſtake all thanksgiving for the peace granted unto them is well-near ſuffocat & extinguiſhed. Their former condition under doubts and fears, is judged to be better then their preſent condition, they wiſh their former fears may return, rather then they ſhould continue in this condition, wherein their tears are dryed up, and their former diligence eaten up. Hence go they on to lay forth their complaints before their intimat acquaintance, concerning Gods diſpenſation and dealing with them, becauſe the ſpirit of fear and reverence toward God, the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication is much diminiſhed and near-by quenched in them. By which complaints they do not only breed trouble to themſelves, but alſo make heavy the hearts of their godly friends, and do tempt them to fall into the like complaints and to grieve the Lords Spirit.

2, This miſtake doth ariſe, partly from the not conſidering and eſteeming of the gracious gifts of peace, and other graces beſtowed upon them, and partly from a wrong compariſon of their former & preſent condition. For, firſt the afflicted perſon taketh no notice of the evidences of a new creature in himſelf, he doth not conſider how

how great a benefit is bestowed upon him, when he feareth to offend God, feareth to be shut out from society with him, and earnestly desireth to be sure of his favour in Christ: he hath not a due estimation of having peace with God and war with sin in himself, joyned together; to be freed from the torment of the conscience condemning him according to the law, and withall a desire and delight in the obedience of the Gospel joyned together. 2. He doth inconsideratly exact of his conscience, that his soul should be in the same disposition before peace be granted, and after that it is bestowed, or that his affections should be stirred up one and the same way in both these cases: for before peace is given he cannot choose but he must have sorrow, heavinesse of heart, unquietnesse, fear, and such like other sad affections. But after that God granteth peace, these perturbations are quieted, tormenting fear ceaseth, lamentations are restrained, tears are washen away in a good measure, and in their place, do thanksgiving to, and praises of God succeed, and every duty do call for their own place in a pacified mind, so that the mans body be not neglected as before, but care had of keeping health, for inabling to do what is required of him in his calling toward every one with whom he liveth: For, now his condition being changed, why should not his affections, and the effects depending on them be changed also? Who can reasonably exact the same duties of a man in a fight, which he may require of him when he hath gotten the victory? who can expect the same carriage from a man when he is sick and when he is in health? Doth not the Apostle say, *Jam.* 5, 13. *If any man be afflicted let him pray? Is any merry, let him sing Psalms.*

3. For remedy of this evil, 1. let the afflicted examine himself whether this peace hath had a conflict of conscience and faith, under the sense of sin and fear of the wrath threatned in the Law, going before it or not? 2. Whether this peace hath followed upon flying

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to Christ by faith, unto whom he did cleave in his sad exercise? 3. Whether this peace hath followed after prayer and supplication made to God for it, that he might without fear of his enemies serve God all the dayes of his life? 4. And last of all, whether his heart still inclineth and endeavoureth to give obedience to the commands of God, and to be grieved for his shortcoming therein? If these things do concur which beseem a convert, let him perswade himself his peace which he hath censured for carnal security, is the solid peace of God mistaken by him. And therefore, 1. let him no more suspect the gift of God, but hold fast the Word of God, which faith of the soul chased to Christ, hath laid hold on, that being now justified by faith, he may have peace with God, *Rom.* 5. 1. For, God doth not give to his supplicant carnal security for peace, a stone for bread, and an adder for fish. But, 2. let him observe the wiles and malice of Sathan, who cannot endure that the soul fled from him to Christ should have peace, or in the enjoying of it blesse God for his gift of grace. And, 3. let him study to make use of this peace granted to him, going on in the obedience of Gods commands chearfully, and to be ready for new conflicts and assaults from Sathan, and not be afraid of being deprived of the peace of God, while he by faith in Christ is yoked in battel against sin which he seeth in the world and feeleth in himself.

CHAP. XII.

Of the case of a convert, taking some acts of justifying faith to be high presumption in his person.

THis case is like the former. Some true converts are, who have fled to Christ for remission of sin and delivery from perdition, and have applyed the promises made for sanctification and consolation, and full salvation after this life, in such a measure as doth suffice them for encouragment to wrestle with difficulties, where-

with

with they may meet in their way to heaven. But when the higheſt and moſt excellent priviledges of the Goſpel are preſented to them, and come to be made uſe of, ſuch as are, *ſitting together with Chriſt in heavenly places*, Eoheſ. 2. 6. *being co-heirs annexed with Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. 8. 17. *So eſteemed of*, and loved by Chriſt, *that they who touch his Saints, do touch the apple of his eye, Judging the world and the damned Angels*, 1 Cor. 6. 3. and ſuch like other priviledges, they are at a ſtand, and dar not apply theſe priviledges for fear of high preſumption.

2. Neither muſt we wonder that a ſoul ſhould fall in this exerciſe, and yet adhere to Chriſt as a convert and true believer: For, when a ſinner for fear of perdition is chaſed to a Saviour, and dar not looſe his grips leſt he fall in the pit, he may ſeem to himſelf to be in good caſe if he get in to Chriſt, albeit he do not thruſt himſelf upon ſuch high priviledges, and joyn himſelf with *Abraham*, and the Patriarchs and Prophets. Like unto *Mephiboſheth*, who judged himſelf to have found grace enough at *Davids* hand, that his life was ſpared, but trembled when he was priviledg'd to come to the Kings table, who, in his own eyes, was like a dead dog for his unworthineſſe, as he judged of himſelf. Or like the prodigal in the Goſpel, who in his own eyes was not worthy to be counted a child of the family, but content to be as one of the hired ſervants in his fathers houſe. And true it is, that the wonderfull largeneſſe of the promiſes of the Goſpel maketh the true convert lately come forth of the ſlavery of ſin and Sathan, to ſtand ſo aſtoniſhed, that he dar not take to him ſo glorious titles, priviledges and conſolations as the Scripture doth allow him: yea, when he would lift up himſelf to believe the glory promiſed, he can no more apprehend the infinit love and grace of God propounded and adjudged unto him, then he can meaſure the heaven with his ſpan, or compriſe in his hand the great Globe, and round of heaven and earth. From ſuch a conſideration was it, that

Peter

ther did at first utterly refuse to suffer Christ to wash his feet; and that *Martha*, in the beginning of her conference with Christ, could not think of so great a benefit, as the resurrection of her brother *Lazarus* before the day of judgment.

2. The convert in this case, doth wrong to himself and to the Word of God, and to the liberality and rich grace of God; for, so long as he suffereth himself to be born down from imbracing, as safely he may, the rich allowance of God upon a soul reconciled to him by faith in Christ, he not only cuts himself off from that measure of joy of the holy Ghost which he may have, but also giveth occasion and advantage to Sathan, to wrangle and call in question, whether the man hath indeed believed in Christ at all, or whether he hath laid hold on Christ for righteousnesse and salvation by faith unfained: for, if it be presumption for a self-condemned sinner, flying unto Christ by faith, to lay hold upon the benefits which Christ hath prepared, purchased and offered unto him upon this pretended reason, that these benefits are so hudgely great, and the man so small and unworthy in his own eyes, why may not Sathan, with as great reason, (if there were any weight in it) call it presumption for such a man to lay claim unto Christ, who is greater then all his benefits, and so beat him off from faith and confidence in Christ the great gift of God, made of God, to poor sinners fled unto him, wisdom and righteousnesse, sanctification and redemption?

3. Wherefore, to help the convert in this condition, let him consider, he doth well to be feared for presumption, for it is a fearfull evil: but, let him remember to put due difference between presumption, and true faith and confidence; for, 1. presumption is proud and puft up with self-conceit, but we pre-suppose the convert to be humble and laid low in his own eyes, in this condition we are speaking of. 2. Presumption is secure and negligent in the discharge of commanded duties; but

the

the convert we ſpeak of, is about the uſe of the means, and in ſome meaſure diligent in diſcharging commanded duties in his calling. 3. Preſumption layeth hold upon promiſes not made to the preſumptuous, and troubleth not it ſelf with precepts and threatnings; but the convert in this condition we are ſpeaking of, regardeth both precepts and threatnings, and is ſo far from putting forth his hand, without a warrant, unto promiſes, that he ſtands aloof from laying hold on moe promiſes, then he conceiveth neceſſar to ſave his ſoul from hell. 4. The preſumptuous promiſeth to himſelf felicity, albeit he walk in his own wayes, and turneth the grace of God into laſciviouſneſſe, incouraging himſelf to ſin becauſe God is mercifull; but this convert eſheweth ſin, and followeth the way which may lead him to the poſſeſſion of all promiſes. Therefore, 1. let the convert in this condition remember, that Chriſt and all his benefits are ſo joyned together in the grant of grace, that he may confidently ſay, with the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8. 32. that ſeing Chriſt is given to the believer flying unto him, it cannot be but God with him will give all things alſo. 2. Let him conſider, that it is a dangerous mater, not to give credit unto Gods faithfull Word holden forth in one promiſe, as well as in another: For, ſeing he is worthy to be believed in the firſt promiſe, of receiving into favour a ſinner flying to Chriſt, why ſhall he not have the glory of truth and grace in the reſt of the promiſes, which belong to the accompliſhing of the full glorification of the man reconciled. 3. And laſt of all, let the convert in this condition conſider, how near he draweth to a popiſh error in this practice; for, Papiſts do meaſure the gifts of God unto men, by the mans merit and well-deſerving, and not by meer grace only, and upon this ground do reckon it preſumption for any ordinar Chriſtians to be aſſured in this life, that God will guide them with his counſel, and at their departure out of this life, immediatly receive them into glory. For, if the convert, being

being chased by the law to lay hold on Christ (who is the end of the law for righteousnesse unto every one that believeth) shall stand aback from laying hold on the highest priviledges of Saints, and the greatest promises made to justified souls, because of his own unworthinesse, doth he not say in effect, if I were more worthy and like in holinesse unto such and such Saints, I could be more confident to lay hold on these high promises: which ground, if it be once holden, it makes the reason of the mans confidence to be his own well-deserving, and not the meer and only grace of God the free promiser thereof, and so the way of salvation by grace should be undermined and over-turned: which is absurd, because the Apostle, *Ephes.* 2. 8. saith, *that by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of our selves, it is the gift of God.* Therefore let not the humbled convert think it presumption to lay hold on Christ and the fulnesse of all promised grace in him, how large soever it be.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the condition of the convert, fearing that the joy of the holy Ghost which he hath felt, be found only to be either the joy of speculation, common to temporal believers, or a meer delusion.

OF this sort also is this case, wherein the convert doth suspect, that the joy of the Spirit which he hath felt at some times was either a joy of speculation or contemplation only, such as Philosophers may find in their study of humane learning, or else a delusion of Sathan also. This case may fall upon the true convert in the time of affliction and felt desertion, when not only the sense of consolation is withdrawn, but also sorrow and heavinesse have seized on his spirit, when the sharpnesse of affliction takes up the whole soul, and sorrow doth fill the heart. At such a time the memory of by-past joy is greatly darkned, and the sense of pre-

ſent grief inflameth the whole man. For as it falleth forth in a mans body, that both ſweet and ſour liquor, do affect the ſenſe of taſting moſt, when they are preſently felt, but when they are paſt, the memory of them doth affect the imagination only, and that but lightly in compariſon with preſent ſenſe. As the ſenſe of a fiery coal doth otherwayes affect us when it touches our fleſh, then the memory of the pain we have felt, doth move us when the pain is paſt; So it is in the paſſions of the ſoul, for joyes ſpiritual ſhine for a while, when they are lately raiſed up in the ſoul, but after a time they are darkned, and in ſome ſort worn out, eſpecially when grief doth ariſe, then they are ſwallowed up with ſorrow, or are well near forgotten, or lightly eſteemed and rejected: *My ſoul refuſed comfort*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſ.* 77. 2. Such was *Davids* condition, *Pſ.* 116. 11. when he *ſaid in his haſte all men are lyars*: at which time, whatſoever joy he had felt, in believing the promiſes made to him by *Samuel* or other Prophets, he counted all to be but deceiving of him and deluſion.

This miſtake is ſtrengthened ordinarily by Sathans tentation and wicked ſuggeſtion, watching upon all occaſions to traduce and ſlander all Gods words and operations. The complaint of *Jeremie* ſavours of this malicious ſuggeſtion, which the Prophet layeth out before God to be rid of it, *Jer.* 20. 7. *Thou haſt deceived me, and I was deceived.* Yea, oft-times it cometh to paſſe, that our old man and corrupt inclination taketh part with Sathan, and when occaſion doth offer, ſcorneth all the ſpiritual affections of the new man, as *Iſhmael* mocked *Iſaacs* devotion.

2. This evil except it be ſpeedily and ſolidly cured, not only caſteth the convert in a miſerable condition, but alſo calleth in queſtion his ſtate, whether at all he be regenerat, reconciled and in the ſtate of grace: for, if the joy of the holy Spirit granted to the ſupplicant praying to God in Chriſt, for confirmation of his faith, granted to the mourner for ſin, that he may be comforted,

ſorted, ſhall be eſteemed as the effect of ſpeculation only, then the comfort of the earneſt-penny and firſt fruits of the ſpirit is loſt, the confirmation of faith by that conſolation is enervat and weakened; thanks-giving formerly offered for the comfort ſometime felt, is recalled, and the teſtimony of Gods Spirit, ſpeaking according to the word in oft-repeated experience, is laid aſide. And ſo the afflicted ſoul ſhall ſeem to himſelf in worſe condition then when he was lying in his ſins, becauſe he ſhall ſeem to himſelf to have loſt his labour from the time that he renounced his ſins. Wherefore it is neceſſary, that this ſickneſſe be ſpeedily cured, leſt it prevail.

3. For remedy of this evil, let the afflicted lay aſide the diſpute for a time whether his joyes and ſpiritual experiences of the Lords working in him, have been reall, as they ſometime ſeemed, and let him turn his eyes upon his preſent miſerable confuſed condition, let him take a new view of his ſins and unworthineſſe, let him obſerve Sathans malice, power and wiles to weaken faith, and what need now he ſtandeth in of Chriſt Mediator, Redeemer, Surety and Phyſician by office, after a new diſcovery of his ſinfulneſſe; and let him look upon the riches of the grace of God offered in the Goſpel to every hungry and thriſty ſoul flying to Chriſt for refuge, and let him ſay to God, Lord there was never a time wherein I had more need of Chriſt for righteouſneſſe and ſalvation, behold I flye unto thee, I welcome and embrace Chriſt offered in the Goſpel, and heartily do conſent unto the covenant of grace through him, and do accept, embrace and relye upon remiſſion of ſins through him, and the imputation of his ſatisfactory righteouſneſſe, made over to ſuch as flye unto him, or elſe I ſhould periſh utterly, and do give up my ſelf to thee, that thou mayeſt write thy law more powerfully on my heart. By this means the confidence of the afflicteds intereſt in the covenant of Grace ſhall be more fixed and made ſure to him, and Sathan

disappointed of his design to cast the afflicted by his tentations in mis-belief, and separation from Christ.

4. Thus when he hath renewed the grips of faith in Christ, let him now enter the lists, and dispute the solidity of his former felt experiences, by discussing the objections which did weaken his estimation of the former felt joyes of the Spirit. One objection against them was, because they were of short endurance, and therefore seemed not solid. The answer may be this, The short staying of the joy of the Spirit is no proof against it, as not true joy; for, it is sufficient earnest of the promised salvation, if when the Word of God in the Gospel speaketh peace to the man fled to Christ he findeth the Word believed to be confirmed to the believer by peace and joy, albeit the sense of it remain but a short while; *After you believed*, saith the Apostle, *you were sealed with the spirit of promise*, Ephes. 1. 11. As it is not sufficient to prove, that wholsom water given to a feaver-sick person is not a wholsom drink, because the cooling refreshment by it, endureth but a short while; So it is not sufficient to prove, that consolation and joy given to a sorrowfull sinner, seeking favour through Christ, is not solid and true joy, because it stayeth but a short while. It is sufficient, that it hath stayed so long as was needfull; for, after the word of promise was believed, the joy was sent to ease the afflicted souls present grief, and to give him earnest, that full and lasting joy should be given in due time unto him. When the messenger hath done his commission, let him return to his master. As the sheet let down in the vision from heaven to *Peter*, after it had served for *Peters* instruction, it was taken up to heaven again, *Act.* 10. The Spouse in the *Canticle* knew by experience, that her spiritual joyes would not last long, and therefore chargeth the daughters of *Jerusalem* that they waken not her beloved till he pleased.

5. Another objection is this. If my joy had been solid (saith the afflicted) it should have brought forth better

better fruits then it hath done; but joy ſpiritual, as I then called it, did degenerat into a carnal ſecurity, and I was not the more holy by it. To which objection the anſwer may be this, the blame of this is not to be laid on ſpiritual joy, but upon the abuſe of this mercy, by ingratitude for this gracious blink of felt favour, negligence in the uſe of means to entertain this ſenſe, by ſleepineſſe of conſcience and other ſins, and namely the laying too much weight upon this ſenſe, and not fixing the heart by ſo much more upon the word of promiſe when felt conſolation may be withdrawn, is a juſt cauſe; for, ſpiritual joy is not given to any to build upon its continuance, but to make the convert hold the confirmed word of promiſe ſo much the faſter, when for the exerciſe of faith, comfortable feelings are withdrawn. The ſpouſe in the *Canticle* after a feaſt of this kind, falleth a ſleep, and giveth ſlight entertaining to the Bridegroom when called upon by his word, for which ſhe is chaſtiſed, by his withdrawing of his comfortable preſence, *Cant.* 5. 1, 2, 3. &c. But let us put the caſe, that the felt joy of the ſpirit were not abuſed, yet is it not unuſual for God to withdraw conſolation, and to ſend trouble and anguiſh on the ſoul of his dear child, to try his faith and train him on to hold the word of his grace, in the hardeſt condition he can be into, as he did exerciſe *Job*, and *Jeremie* the Prophet, *Jer.* 20. and the Pſalmiſt, *Pſ.* 77. In which condition, to ſuſpect that the conſolation and joy of the ſpirit, ſpeaking to the heart by his word, is not his gracious operation, or is a deluſion, cannot but exceedingly grieve the Lord, and give him cauſe to chaſtiſe this ſuſpicion with deſertion.

6. But how may I know, ſaith the afflicted, that my joy was ſolid and was indeed the gracious operation of the holy Spitit? For anſwer, 1. If this joy was given to him when, or after, he was lamenting his ſins, and fearing wrath deſerved, and flying unto Chriſt offered in the Goſpel, he hath reaſon to reckon that joy to be

such as the Word of the Gospel doth promise and approve. 2. If during the time of his sweet feeling of peace and joy through Christ, he found his faith in God, and love to Christ confirmed and strengthned, if the Word of the Gospel was in more estimation with him, if his heart was inlarged to blesse, praise and thank God for manifesting himself in Christ reconciled, if the purpose of following after holinesse was renewed in him, he hath no reason to suspect his joy and comfort. 3. If after the removing of this sweet feeling he is going on in the study of holinesse, believing in Christ, how heavy in heart soever he may be, by affliction and tentation, he may be assured his sometime felt joy of the Lords Spirit was solid, and his present suspicion thereof to be an evidence of his infirmity, and of a tentation from Sathan. This was the way how the Psalmist wrestled out of his sad condition, *Psal.* 77.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the converts suspecting, that his zeal for God and against the sins of others hath been fleshly severity and imprudent temerity

IT cometh to passe, that they who love God sincerely, and cannot endure the out-breakings of the wicked, do sometimes transgresse the bounds of moderat zeal, and being overtaken in some miscarriage, for which being rebuked by their friends, or by them in power censured or civilly chastised, do in stead of moderating their zeal in time coming, grow more slack and remisse in their zeal, suspecting themselves inclined to unreasonable severity and rashnesse, and ready to be esteemed haters of mens persons by those among whom they live, as in some by-gone experience they have already felt. And upon this occasion the tentation of Sathan falleth on, tending to extinguish the fervency of true zeal required in all true converts.

And

And here there is danger leſt true zeal grow cold, and the convert become luke-warm, both in curbing ſin in others under his charge, and in purſuing duties in his own perſon. In which ſickneſſe he may be the better pleaſed with himſelf, by ſo much as his friends and others do commend him for his moderation and prudence, as they ſhall call it.

2. As to the remedy of this evil, there is no doubt, but that may befall true zeal, which is common to other vertues, of which there is none ſo perfect, but ſome in-lake or exceſſe may be obſerved in them. And therefore, as it is without reaſon to go back from purſuing duty in the exerciſe of other vertues, becauſe imperfections therein are remarkable from time to time, So is it without reaſon to grow luke-warm in zeal which may render a man loathſome unto Chriſt, *Rev.* 2. 3. Wherefore let the convert take heed what the Lords Word doth require of him in his calling, and labour to diſcharge his duty towards others, ſo as he may be found both zealous and prudent, that in the expreſſions of his zeal againſt ſin, meekneſſe and love to the offender may be manifeſted: 2. To this intent, let the convert carefully take heed to entertain theſe three properties of commendable zeal, which are, 1. The fear of God. 2. Humility of heart. 3. The love of his neighbour: for, the *fear* of God will not ſuffer the convert to depart from his commandments; *Humilty* of heart will make the man modeſt in his expreſſions; and the *love* of his neighbour will make him mix meekneſſe and compaſſion toward ſinners with his zeal againſt offences. This is the right ſeaſoning of zeal, which the Apoſtle calleth the zeal of God according to knowledge.

CHAP. XV.

Of the converts ſuſpecting his aiming at circumſpect walking, ſhall be found in him ſcrupuloſity.

SOmetime it cometh to paſſe, that the convert, being under hard exerciſe before his conſolation, doth put on the whole armour of God, and ſtudieth to walk circumſpectly for a while, but after a time he becometh ſomewhat weary of the yoke, ſuſpecting he hath given too much way unto ſcrupuloſity, whereupon he becometh more remiſſe and ſlack in his watchfulneſſe and diligence, laying aſide the armour of God, as *David* laid aſide the armour of King *Saul*, wherewith he was not accuſtomed.

For ſatisfying himſelf in this courſe, I preſuppone he maketh uſe of three pretended reaſons. The firſt is, becauſe it is impoſſible for any man to attain to ſuch circumſpection in his carriage as becometh him: for, it is no leſſe then to aim at perfect obedience of the law, which the Apoſtle hath declared to be impoſſible, becauſe of the weakneſſe of the fleſh, *Rom.* 8. 3. The next pretended reaſon is, becauſe this bending of a mans ſpirit maketh the conſcience unquiet, that a man cannot injoy the peace of God granted in the Goſpel. The third pretended reaſon is, becauſe it doth reſtrain chriſtian liberty in many things lawfull, ſo as a man can neither make uſe of recreation of body, or mind without ſcruple; and here we muſt beware on the one hand leſt we give way to any degree of miſ-regarding the law, which is the error of the Antinomians; and on the other hand, leſt we inſnare the conſcience of converts, and hinder them in the lawfull uſe of what God doth allow unto them.

2. For remedy of this evil, let the convert know that there is a neceſſity of aiming at circumſpect walking. This duty is indiſpenſable: for, if a chink be opened here in the veſſel for the leaſt entry of water, it may

may ere long fill and ſink the whole ſhip: for, the command ſtandeth unmoveable, Heb. 12. 14. *Follow peace with all men and holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* And, 1 Pet. 1. 15. *As he that hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation.* And, Mat. 5. 48. Chriſt hath ſaid, *Be ye perfect, as your father in heaven is perfect.*

This ground being laid, let us examine theſe three pretended reaſons. As to the firſt, albeit the attaining unto the perfect obedience of the Law in this life be impoſſible, becauſe of the infirmity of corrupt nature; yet, the aiming at the perfect obedience of Gods Commands is both poſſible and profitable, and he who aimeth at perfection of obedience in this life, ſhall attain it fully in the life to come. It is one thing to *give perfect* obedience unto the Law, for in many things we do ſin all of us; another thing *to endeavour*, according to the meaſure of grace given, to obey the Law perfectly. For, God, who hath looſed converts, fled to Chriſt, from the covenant of Works or the covenant of the Law, he hath not looſed his ſubjects from obedience to the Law-giver, he hath not aboliſhed the ten Commands, he hath not looſed the duties of the redeemed and converted ſouls, but by receiving them in favour through faith in Chriſt, he doth augment their obligation to ſerve the Lord their Redeemer, ſo much more chearfully and carefully, as the grace is large in forgiving them their ſins, and tranſlating them from the ſlavery of ſin and Sathan, into the kingdom of Chriſt.

Again, albeit it be true, that it is impoſſible to attain perfect obedience unto the Law, yet there is great advantage to be had by circumſpect walking and aiming at perfect obedience: for, this, 1. doth glorifie our heavenly Father, when we ſtrive to be conform to his will and to have reſpect to all his commands. 2. This endeavour adorneth the Goſpel and profeſſion of our moſt holy faith, whereby we lay hold on the grace of free juſtification, that we may become the ſervants of righteouſneſſe

righteousnesse indeed. 3. This endeavour beareth witnesse of our sincere desire to serve God with all our heart, albeit we attain not to the perfection of obedience in this life. 4. This endeavour giveth unto us daily, new mater of humiliation, when in our aiming at our duty, we come very short of our mark we shoot at. 5. This endeavour and short-coming, for all we can do, maketh us despair of seeking justification by works before God, and to esteem highly, and make use by faith, of Christs satisfaction for us imputed to us for righteousnesse, which is a garment able to hide our imperfections and nakednesse. 6. This endeavour to walk circumspectly, puts us to the exercise of all christian graces, and to strive with others and with our selves, to perfect holinesse in the fear of God.

3. As for the second pretended reason, that this endeavour, to walk circumspectly, may make the conscience unquiet, it puts a foul aspersion on the holy precept of the Apostle, *Ephes.* 5. 15, 16, 17. who hath declared this to be a mans wisdom, and so a good mean of making his conscience quiet, and to establish in it the peace of God: For, by this endeavour, to walk circumspectly, believers in Christ are assured, that they are without the reach of condemnation, because they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, *Rom.* 8. 1. Secondly, this endeavour is the evidence of a good conscience, which accompanyeth true faith, and in a maner, doth guard the conscience from just challenges which might trouble the same. Thirdly, by this endeavour, the believer is, by a holy necessity, forced to cleave closse unto Christ, to converse with him in heaven, that the pollution of daily sin may be washen away, by new application of Christs expiatory sacrifice to the believer, and that Christ may let forth more strength to him to walk in the way of commanded duties, and so the convert may stand in the grace of God. Thus the peace of God, offered and covenanted in the Gospel, is preserved in him, so long as this endeavour, to walk circumspectly, is entertained.

4. As

4. As for the third pretended reaſon againſt circumſpect walking, as if by it Chriſtian-liberty ſhall be croſſed and cut ſhort, it is a falſe pretenſe; for, the contrair is true, that Chriſtian-liberty is not hurt, but helped and preſerved, by circumſpect walking: for, this is *true Chriſtian-liberty*, to have allowance of the uſe of the benefits which God doth beſtow with his bleſſing, ſo far as may ſerve our well-fare; ſeing it is not a point of Chriſtian-liberty, licentiouſly, by intemperance, to abuſe Gods benefits, and turn them to our own hurt. Wherefore, let our heart be all day in the fear of God, that we may, in lawfull manner, make uſe of lawfull things; neither doth the ſtudy of holineſſe make recreations of body and mind unlawfull, but reſtraineth immoderat and untimeous uſe of things lawfull. All that Chriſtian liberty granteth unto us, is, that whether we eat or drink, or what lawfull thing elſe we do, we do all for the glory of God, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. that is, ſo as we may be ſtrengthened and ſet forward, to glorifie God in Chriſt in neceſſar duties. As for the maner and meaſure to be keeped in the uſe of things lawfull, prudence muſt be asked of God, who will direct us in this as in other Chriſtian duties.

CHAP. XVI.

Concerning the converts ſuſpicion, that his ſoftneſs of heart is nothing but a natural diſpoſition to weep upon any occaſion.

WHen the Lord hath taken away from the ſinner a heart of ſtone, and hath given unto him a heart of fleſh, ſo that he dar not any more harden himſelf againſt the threatnings of Gods Word, but doth tremble at the hearing thereof, as ſpeaketh *Iſaiah*, 66. 2. and in his prayer doth pour forth his heart ordinarily with tears, he may (as experience hath taught) fall in a ſuſpicion of this ordinar or frequent melting of heart, as if it were nothing elſe but a childiſh or woman-like temper

temper of body and ſpirit, and no evidence of contrition for ſpiritual cauſes, which the Scripture requireth and commendeth in the penitent.

2. In this caſe there is danger on either hand, if the convert be not wary and circumſpect in this condition; for, on the one hand he is in hazard of making light account of the work of God, who hath taken from him the heart of ſtone, and given him an heart of fleſh. On the other hand, he is in hazard of laying too much weight on his tears, if once he be ſatisfied about the ſuſpicion he hath of his own tears, and made clear, that they were proofs and evidences of his ſincerity in his prayers to God.

That there is a danger on either hand, experience hath taught; for, ſome ſincere converts, having entertained the ſuſpicion, that their tears in prayer proceeded from the ſoft temper of their natural complexion & diſpoſition of ſpirit, have reſiſted their inclination to mourn, and ſtriven againſt letting forth of tears ſo far, that they have become ſo dry for a long time, and have prayed more perfunctoriouſly then before, that when juſt cauſes of grief and tears were given unto them, they were not able to bring forth one tear for eaſing of their grieved heart. On the other hand, experience hath taught, that ſome, looking upon the expreſſions of the Saints in Scripture concerning their tears, have laid ſo much weight upon their tears, as they have numbered, in a manner, all the drops of their eyes, and from the leſſe or more quantity of them, made reckoning of their own better or worſe condition, and of Gods acceptation of their prayers leſſe or more.

3. This tenderneſſe of heart, and eaſineſſe to be moved unto tears, for ſpiritual motives, is a rare gift. Few they are, who with ſenſe of the body of death and original ſin bearing them down, do lament their natural ſinfulneſſe in their beſt condition with *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. 24. Few ſhall be found ſo affectionat, to the glory of God and ſalvation of peoples ſouls, as to pour out tears both in

in ſecret and openly, for promoving thereof, as the Apoſtle did, *Act.* 20. 19, 21. and, 2 *Cor.* 2. 4. Few like *Timothy*, whoſe heart was ſo tender, that the Apoſtle could not but obſerve his tears, and remember them, 2 *Tim.* 1. 4. Yet, we doubt not, that from age to age ſundry be, who by the grace of God have this conſtantly melting heart, according to the meaſure of Gods free donation, ſome with tears, ſome without tears. And therefore, if there be found in ſuch mourners, an honeſt endeavour to walk circumſpectly, let not the ſuſpicion, that their tenderneſſe is but natural weakneſſe of ſpirit or bodily complexion, be entertained. Only let the giver of the grace of a tender heart be relyed upon, and not their tears, as if they were any more then witneſſes of their honeſt affection in ſpiritual exerciſes; for, ſuch prayers may prove ſincere and acceptable to God, both when they cannot mourn, and alſo when their heart ſeemeth withered, hard and dry.

CHAP. XVII.

Concerning the converts ſuſpicion, that all his devotion is but lip-labour which is not joyned with a tender and melting heart, and with Gods ſenſible approbation.

AS ſome are ſuſpicious of their condition, becauſe of their ordinar tenderneſſe and melting of heart; So other ſome are ſuſpicious of their condition, becauſe they find not their heart tender and ſoft in their devotion. All converts do agree in this, that God muſt be worſhiped in ſpirit and truth, and that it is not acceptable worſhip to God, if a man draw near him with his lips, when his heart is far from him: whereupon, every convert, when he is mindfull of his duty, goeth about to worſhip God with underſtanding and inward affection of heart, to confeſſe ſin, deprecat wrath, ask of God things neceſſar, interceed for others, give thanks to God for his benefits, and praiſe him for his works and working, ſo as his affections may be con-

form to his expressions, and the conscience may approve both his words and his hearty affections, and God may, with his peace and consolation, approve the worshiper. But some converts are, who, albeit in sincerity they worship God, yet they count all their devotion to be but lip-labour, except they find their affections wakened up and their heart tender, and some vigour of spiritual life in their exercises, and the sense of Gods approbation of their worship, by giving sense of his peace and consolation to them in their worship. Hence oft-times doth suspicion arise, without just ground, that they are deserted of God, that he is displeased with them; and this suspicion being entertained, doth send forth complaints, and bringeth on coldriseness in prayer and discouragement.

2. This unjust suspicion of the grace of prayer, the Lord doth oft-times chastise by with-drawing peace and comfort, and order in prayer and of words also, that he who complained that his devotion was but lip-labour, because he found not such measure of affection as he would have had, nor that consolation which he wished to have, shall find himself in worse taking after his complaining, then he was in at first, when he began to suspect his condition. It is true, that confusion of mind, and want of words to expresse the case wherein he is, may fall on a convert, by reason of afflictions and manifold temptations, and yet he may be free from this suspicion of Gods affection and acceptation of his person and prayers; as the Apostle doth teach us, *Rom.* 8. 26. *Likewayes, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.* But when this cutting short of the gift of prayer, in any measure, doth follow after suspicion of Gods respect and good will toward the complaining and discouraged convert, it is a fatherly chastisement from God, threatning the convert with a greater measure of desertion and heavier temptation, except

except he repent his folly and return to God, whom by his ſuſpicion and miſbelief he hath offended.

3. For remedy of this evil, theſe five things muſt be diſtinguiſhed by the afflicted convert; 1. the labour of the lips, or formality in prayer or devotion; 2. prayer in faith; 3. prayer with felt and obſerved affection in prayer; 4. prayer approven of God; 5. prayer with the ſenſe and feeling of Gods approbation.

As to the firſt, the labour of the lips, or formality in prayer which the Scripture doth condemn, is when a man prayeth with his mouth for things neceſſar or lawfull, and is about the external work of devotion, wherein he pleaſeth himſelf, and doth reſt upon the work wrought without affection of heart or faith, as we ſee, *Iſ.* 58. 1, 2, 3. and this is not the caſe of the convert of whom we are ſpeaking; for, becauſe he eſteems his devotion to be but a formality, he is diſpleaſed with himſelf and is unquiet.

As to the ſecond, prayer in faith, is when the convert miſſeth freedom of ſpeech, and anſwerable affection to his ſpeech in his devotion in prayer, praiſes, thankſgiving, interceſſion, *&c.* yet, becauſe the duty is commanded, he doth offer it up to God with hope of acceptation, and yet is diſpleaſed with himſelf, and humbled in the ſenſe of his coldrife affections, which is the duty of the convert of whom we are ſpeaking, but the not eſteeming this his devotion through Chriſt acceptable, is his fault.

As to the third; prayer or devotion with felt affection in diſcharging it, is when the convert poureth out his heart unto God with fredom of ſpeech, and yet cannot be quiet, becauſe he doth not feel any ſign of Gods approbation of him and hearing of his ſupplication, and this was the caſe of the Pſalmiſt in ſundry Pſalms. But this is not the caſe of the convert we are ſpeaking of; for, he complaineth of the hardneſſe of his heart and want of affection, and doth weaken his own faith, which is his fault.

As

As to the fourth; prayer approven of God, is when the convert doth offer his devotion to God in ſincerity, and prayeth for what is promiſed, in hope to be heard and anſwered in due time. And this prayer or devotion is approven by God in Scripture, whether the convert be ſatisfied with the meaſure of anſwerable affection to his words, or not, as the Apoſtle teſtifieth. 1 *Joh.* 5.14, 15. And this ſhould be obſerved by the convert, of whom we are ſpeaking, for rectifying his judgment and quieting of him, albeit he neither find his affection moved as he would, nor find conſolation from God as he would.

As to the fifth; prayer or devotion, with the ſenſe and feeling of Gods approbation, is when God not only approveth the converts prayer and devotion, by his Word in the Scripture, but alſo by his Spirit doth ſenſibly comfort the ſupplicant, and ſends him to his calling with joy. So did he deal oft-times with the Pſalmiſt *David*, and ſo did he comfort *Samuels* mother, in, and after her prayer, 1 *Sam.* 1. This is the thing which the convert we ſpeak of would be at, and which would ſatisfie him if he could come to it.

4. This condition is the ſweeteſt to the ſupplicant, and much to be deſired, with ſubmiſſion to Gods diſpenſation whatſoever it be, but it is not the only condition acceptable to God, as we ſee, 1 *Joh.* 5.14. 15. *This is the confidence which we have in God, that if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us, and if we know that he heareth us, whatſoever we ask we know we have the petitions that we deſired of him.* And that the mater is ſo, may be perceived in *David's* condition at ſundry times; for, *Pſ.* 119. ſeven or eight times he prayeth, *Quicken thou me according to thy word.* He findeth in himſelf much deadneſſe of ſpirit, yet he continueth meekly praying to be quickened in the ſervice of God.

5. Wherefore, ſo oft as the convert is diſpleaſed for any defect he findeth in his devotion, let him, 1. humble himſelf in the ſenſe of his imperfection, and betake himſelf

himself so much the more to the intercession of Christ, and lay hold more firmly upon the satisfaction made by the Mediatour, and draw by faith grace for grace out of his fulnesse, and let him in faith and sincerity worship God, and live holily in his conversation and not be afraid that his devotion shall be esteemed of God to be but lip-labour. 2. To this end, let him rightly construe Gods dispensation, and consider that his gifts are wisely given forth for the good of his people: for, sometime he giveth to will that which is good, without ability for the time to effectuat what the convert willeth; he may give a willing heart to pray affectionatly, and not for the time grant ability to pray as his child would, *Rom.* 7. 18. Sometime he may give no more but to sigh and groan, without ability to expresse the confused desires of his heart, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. Sometime he will suggest words, and make the supplicant in sincerity of faith present the words put in his mouth, *Hos.* 14. 1, 2. Sometime he will grant to the supplicant to bear out much disputation in his prayers, without sensible consolation, *Ps.* 77. Sometime he will grant the supplicant a looſed heart in prayer and abundance of tears, and yet seem for a time not to regard them, *Ps.* 6. Sometime he will grant confidence and consolation to the supplicant, as, *Ps.* 6. and many other *Psalms*. And certainly, the variety of divine dispensation to his children cannot be told; in all which, he requires of his supplicants meek submission, and perseverance in prayer, with confidence to find a good answer at last: for, if his child do not accept well of the measure which is bestowed on him, he may readily find the measure he complained of, more scant, and confusion of mind without words to fall upon him, and if yet he shall not wisely submit himself to Gods exercising of him, he may fall in harder trouble and questioning of his state in grace, and be tempted to restrain prayer till he cease complaining, and flye for refuge to Christ the Mediatour, and come to a bet-

ter estimation of the measure of presence with him when he began to complain.

CHAP. XVIII.

Concerning the converts looking upon the fight of his faith, as if it were the failing of his faith.

SIncere faith in Christ is the special grace of God, given to the elect only; which grace, the more we do exercise it, the more we please God: for, without faith it is impossible to please him, *Heb.* 11. 6. This saving grace the Lord taketh pleasure to put it unto tryall and exercise, that thereby he may train it on, and foster and increase it, and bring it forth to light, both for his own glory and for the commendation of his children, as is told us, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. In which exercise, the true convert is oft-times much mistaken, and doth mis-construe his condition. The reasons are, 1: the faith of young converts is very imperfect, knowledge is many wayes darkened, and the application of promises is very weak. 2. When Sathan by his tentations obscures the truth, which should strengthen faith, the convert finding himself in the mist, may be at a stand, till his sight be cleared up and he freed from the tentation. 3. The sincere convert, in the conscience of his own imperfection, and consideration of the deceitfulnesse of the heart, is wary and suspicious, that he may be easily deceived, and take historical or temporal faith for true saving faith, and so doth readily lay hold on Sathans suggestions against the sincerity of his faith. 4. In the conflict, which his faith oft-times hath with mis-belief, strengthened by Sathans tentations, he finds himself now and then foiled by yielding unto the suggestion of Sathan; as *Davids* experience teacheth may befall both the elder and younger souldiers, *Psal.* 116. 11. *I said in my haste, all men are lyars*, meaning *Samuel* and other Prophets, who promised to *David* in Gods name he should be King. 5. In the fight of

of faith, some infirmity is alwayes manifested, and the convert is forced to acknowledge, that his faith is not so strong as he supposed it to be before the fight, whereupon he is ready to suspect his fight in faith to be a fainting and decaying in faith. 6. Sometime the convert by giving way to sin, doth grieve the holy Spirit, and provoke him to withdraw his comfortable testimony, which he gave in former time to the convert, which bringeth him into suspicion of the sincerity of his faith, which seemed to himself sound and unfained before.

2. This case is both troublesome to the convert and dangerous; for, till it be cured, it groweth like a rageing feaver, and sets upon the vital power of justifying faith, and at least hindereth the exercise thereof not a little.

For remedy whereof, let the afflicted convert put difference between an infirm faith, and felt infirmity in faith fighting: for, albeit the convert, in the conflict of faith against tentations to mis-belief, do feel infirmity, yet is not his faith to be accounted infirm simply, because whatsoever infirmity he feels in his fight, yet his fighting against tentations proveth his faith to be so much the stronger, as he resisteth mis-belief and cleaveth closer to Christ.

2. Let him consider, that the Lord suffereth his child to be exercised with tentations, of set purpose to humble him, and empty him of all confidence in his own wisdom, righteousnesse and strength, that he may gather strength in his fighting, by Scripture, holden up to God in prayer, and so wax valiant in fight, as believers have been helped before, *Heb.* 11. 34..

3. Let the convert put difference between faith and a setled perswasion: for, setled and full perswasion excludes all dubitation for the time, But saving faith may be where doubting is and unbelief is felt; as the father of the possessed child in his prayer to Christ maketh manifest, *Lord, I believe*, saith he, *help my unbelief*.

4. Let him put difference between dubitation ſuggeſted, and faith ſtriving to overcome dubitation: for, dubitation bewrayeth infirmity of faith, but ſtriving againſt dubitation, doth evidence life and vigour in faith to be preſent, and is acceptable ſervice to God.

5. Let him put difference between the doubting of the truth of the promiſe and the weak griping of it; for he that doubts of the truth of the promiſe, is, (*Jam.* 1. 6, 7.) like a wave of the ſea, and can expect nothing. But he that layes hold on the promiſe, with a trembling hand, and ſtriveth to hold it faſt againſt doubting, may expect to obtain.

6. Let him put difference between his ſuſpicion of the failing of his faith and the right judging of it: for, in the mean time of his fighting and fear of failing, he goeth on in exerciſe of faith, fearing to ſuccumb, yet reſolute not to depart from Chriſt: In the love and eſtimation of whoſe grace, he goeth on and groweth, longing for the victory and for a nearer felt fellowſhip with him; which if he did obſerve and conſider, his judgement ſhould be rectified.

Laſt of all, let him put difference between a haſty apprehenſion of the failing of his faith, and a fixed opinion that his faith is but fancy: for, a ſtrong ſouldier may be ſurprized on a ſuddain (as *David*, Pſ. 31. 22. and Pſ. 116. 11. and *Jonah*, 2. 3, 4. do furniſh inſtances) who ſhortly after did gather their courage and entered the liſts afreſh, and became victorious againſt their tentations unto misbelief.

Therefore let the wreſtler be of good courage; for, nothing can prove the ſincerity of his faith more then his wreſtling againſt diſtruſt, and his looking towards Chriſt through all the clouds which hinder his ſight, and his ſorrowing for his unbelief, for his weak holding grip of the covenant of grace, and for his inability to glorifie the truth of the Goſpel, and rich grace of God offered in Chriſt: Eſpecially when he conſidereth, that the Spirit of Chriſt commendeth the exerciſe

of

of faith, with variety of temptations, for a mater of great joy, *Jam.* 1. 2, 3.

CHAP. XIX.

Concerning the converts ſtraitning his charity toward others, more then he did at the firſt time of his converſion, conceiving his former larger charity, was unwarrantable folly.

ALl converts muſt agree to Chriſts saying, *Joh.* 13.35. *By this ſhall all men know, that ye are my diſciples, if ye have love one to another.* No man doubteth of this his duty in general; but ſundry make queſtion about the exerciſe and expreſſion of their charity: for, ſome conceive, that their former charity (in the mater of judging of others, and in the mater of affection to others, and in the mater of actual expreſſion of their charity) hath been ill beſtowed toward unworthy and ill-deſerving perſons. And this they reckon to have been folly; and therefore do reſolve to diſpoſe of their judgement, affection and good deeds more prudently then they have done, that their charitable eſtimation, affection and expreſſion actual, ſhall be drawn forth toward the worthy and well-deſerving diſciples of their acquaintance, thus they condemn for folly what was right indeed. The main pretenſes of reaſon for their reſolution, are two. The firſt is, becauſe they perceive many whom they judge wiſe and godly, to exclude from the number of believers, or diſciples of Chriſt, all in whom the evident ſigns of regeneration do not appear, and ſo do think they may draw the circle of their charity in ſtrait and narrow bounds, and may ſhun to keep Church-fellowſhip in the pure Ordinances of Chriſt with any, ſave approven viſible Saints. The other pretenſe is, becauſe they have found themſelves oft-times deceived by thoſe, of whom ſometime they have entertained good thoughts, and no ſmall eſtimation.

1. As for the first pretense, it belongs to the question of the constitution of visible Churches, whether it be founded upon visible Sanctity or evidences of Regeneration. or upon visible entering in the external covenant of Grace, and profession of subjection to the Doctrine and Discipline of Christ. Of which question, there is enough written by learned and godly men, and and in this place it doth not fall in conveniently to be disputed.

2. Concerning the other pretense, of being oft-times deceived by sundry, such as were unworthy of respect; we grant, that there are many hypocrits who pretend to be Saints, and worthy to be blamed in that respect: and it is no wonder, that the charity of many wax cold, when so many speak vanity, every man to his neighbour, *Ps.* 12. 2. for this our Lord foretold, *Mat.* 24. 12. *Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.* Yet, it is not iustifiable to cut charity short, because of mens ill-deserving; *Rivers of tears*, saith *David*, *run down my eyes, because they keep not thy Commands.* Here is love to Gods glory, and pity toward perishing souls; such mourners were spared in the day of Gods wrath. *Ezek.* 9. 9.

1. *Ob.* But some may say, the same Psalmist did hate the wicked and profane. *Answ.* 1. But he did so with a perfect hatred, not with a carnal and corrupt hatred against their persons, but with a spiritual and sincere hatred, tending to the abolishing of their vice and safety of their persons; for which end, the Psalmist presenteth his affections to be examined of God, and teacheth men, by his example, to purifie their hearts in hating sinners. 2. Put case, that God did reveal unto the Prophet the reprobation of some enemies of God, for whose perdition he prayed in sundry Psalms, that the justice of God might be manifested, and the Church preserved from their malice. This his practice is not to be imitat by them who know not of what spirit they are and cannot justifie before God the integrity of their hearts in the particular.

3. *Ob.*

2. *Ob.* But, put case, saith one, that I am a civil Judge, shall my charity hinder justice and cutting off malefactors, man-slayers, or others such-like? *Ans.* Not; for, charity to the malefactor may stand with the love of Justice and the Common-wealth, when the malefactor is adjudged to death. For, when *Joshua* was to destroy *Achan*, he exhorted him to repent and give glory to God, that his soul might be saved, *Jos.* 7. 19. Likewayes, the Prophets, when they denounced the destruction of Cities and Nations, had melting hearts in compassion toward them who were condemned by God, *Is.* 16. 11. *Jer.* 48. 36. and Christ our Lord, charity it self, weeped for the misery of *Jerusalem*, destinat justly to destruction, *Mat.* 23. 37.

3. *Obj.* But, (saith he) a special regard must be had toward believers in the exercise of charity, *Gal.* 6. 10. *Ans.* It is true; but the Apostles words are, *As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the houshold of faith.* Which houshold consisteth of all them, who by profession have subjected themselves to the doctrine and discipline of Christ, and are members of the visible Church.

4. *Ob.* But (saith he) as all that are of *Israel*, are not the *Israel* of God, *Rom.* 9. 6. So all that are in the visible Church, are not of the houshold of God. *Ans.* Who hath made thee a Judge either to discern who are elect, who not? or to discern what shall become of this man or that man, whereby thou may abandon charity toward him? God hath given to us his Spirit, saith the Apostle, that we may know what saving grace he hath given to *our selves*, but not to know what he hath bestowed on *others*. 1 *Cor.* 2. 10, 11. God, who only searcheth the secrets of all hearts, hath reserved the judgements of mens hearts to himself, and he alone can discern who is the hypocrit, and in whose heart there is no guil.

5. *Ob.* But (saith he) the judgment of charity is not blind, but should be according as the truth is;

otherwayes, I ſhall eſteem a man a true convert, who is not regenerat, and ſo deceive my ſelf. *Anſ.* The judgment of charity, concerning other mens inward eſtate and condition, is not one alwayes with the judgement according to verity; for, the rule of the judgement of charity, is equity and commanded duty, reſerving the judgment according to verity to God. For this diſtinction the Apoſtle gives ground, *Phil.* 1. 6, 7. in charity judging all the Philippians to be ſincere converts; he ſaith, his ſpeech and eſtimation of them was according as *was meet* for him to think. Now equity required, that he ſhould judge the beſt of them all, albeit he did not know the hearts of them all, as he ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 13. 7. charity *believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.* But, for the judgment of other mens eſtate and condition in grace, according to verity, he doth forbid men to judge before the time, 1 *Cor.* 4. 3. 5. *Rom.* 14. 4. *Jam.* 4. 12. And, 1 *Pet.* 5. 12. the Apoſtle, ſpeaking in charity of *Sylvanus*, ſaith, he is *a faithfull brother, as I ſuppoſe.* 2. If we ſee it our duty to ſhow charity to our neighbour, whatſoever he be, our charity is not blind, but clear-ſighted.

6. *Ob.* But (ſaith he) mens profanity, wickedneſſe and atheiſme, may clearly be ſeen; for, the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *The tranſgreſſion of the wicked ſaith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes,* Pſ. 36. 1. and Chriſt, ſpeaking of falſe Prophets, *Mat.* 7. 16. ſaith, *Ye ſhall know them by their fruits.*

Anſ. What the Prophet ſaith by the Spirit, and what Chriſt ſaith, is true; and we grant, that mens ill deeds and corrupt doctrine, do bewray their naughty inward diſpoſition: but what ſerveth this to juſtifie thy raſh judgment of thy brother, that there is no ſaving work of grace in him, becauſe they cannot perceive the evident ſignes thereof in him, in whom poſſibly thou cannot find any reigning vice, or open out-breaking ſcandals? What doth this ſerve to hinder expreſſions and fruits of charity toward open ſinners, ſo long as God

waiteth

waiteth patiently on their repentance? It is one thing to be wary, left we be infected with the contagion of mens ill maners or corrupt doctrine; another thing to cut them off from being the objects of our charity.

7. *Ob.* But we are forbidden (ſaith he) to have fellowſhip with ſinners who may intiſe us to ſin, *Pro.* 1. 11. and to make friendſhip with an angry man, *Pro.* 22. 24.

Anſ. This warineſſe may conſiſt with charity: for, albeit we cannot be partakers with evil workers, or enter in needleſſe familiarity with thoſe with whom we cannot converſe and be free of damnage from them, yet we may not exclude them from the object of our charity, or carry our ſelves ſo toward them, as they can take no good from our hand: for, ſo long as we live in the world, we muſt follow peace with all men and holineſſe, *Heb.* 12. 14. 1 *Cor.* 5. 10,

8. *Obj.* Albeit it be true, that we muſt in common duties of civility and humanity, prudently behave our ſelves, yet we muſt carry otherwayes to profeſſed Chriſtians, if their converſation be groſly ſcandalous; for, with ſuch we are forbidden to eat, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11.

Anſ. This place pertains to the exerciſe of the key of diſcipline, and execution of the cenſure of excommunication judicially pronounced by the Church; as, *ver.* 12. following, doth declare. And this, as it doth not cut off natural duties of parents, or children, or parties married one to another, So it can well conſiſt with charity toward the excommunicat, who, in order to his ſalvation, ſhould be thus dealt with, that he may be humbled and brought to repentance: And ſo doth the Apoſtle give warrand; for when he hath given order to excommunicat ſuch as walk diſorderly, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 14, 15. he ſubjoines, for keeping charity to the excommunicat perſon, ſaying, *Count him not as an enemy, but admoniſh him as a brother.*

9. *Obj.* But I (ſaith he) have been miſtaken and deceived oft-times when I eſteemed charitably of ſome, loved them dearly, and beſtowed not ſparingly on thoſe who

who proved afterward unworthy of such respect and dealing.

Ans. Our Lords words may satisfie this objection, promising whatsoever is done to a disciple, in name of a disciple, shall not want a reward. Thou therefore needs not count thy self deceived in this respect. But, if thou by rash intruding thy self, to judge better or worse of the mans inward condition, hath deceived thy self, be more wise in time coming. For remedy of this evil, 1. let not the convert, mistaken in the point of charity, be feared to be mistaken and hindered from exercise of his charity, because he knoweth not the sincerity of the mans profession: There are relations enough between him and the party toward whom charity is to be exercised, such as bonds natural, civil, ecclesiastick and spiritual, obliging to the duty. 2. Let him be sparing in judging of his neighbour, even within himself, and far more in expressing his judgment of him to his prejudice. 3. Let him rather judge this, that he lay no stumbling block before his feet, which may hinder him in a good, or harden him in an evil course, *Rom.* 14. 13. Let him not be rigid and censorious in aggreging every sinfull infirmity in his neighbour, for this is forbidden, *Jam.* 3. 1, 2. In a word, let a convert beware to alienat any man from making use of his charity, whether by injust suspicion of him, or inhumane dealing with him, or imprudent speeches of him, but rather let his whole carriage toward all in every case be such, that a patent door may be for mutual giving and getting good one by another.

CHAP. XX.

Concerning the converts mistaking his condition, because of felt mistake in his charity and love to God and men.

HItherto we have spoken of two sorts of the converts mistaking of their condition, and have given some instances

instances of their being well pleaſed with themſelves in an evil condition; and ſome inſtances of their being diſpleaſed with themſelves in a good condition. It follows, that we give ſome inſtances of a third ſort of miſtaking in the converts complaining of his condition, as if it were altogether evil, when indeed his condition is partly good and partly evil; and the firſt ſhall be of thoſe who do lament their condition, becauſe they cannot be affected with the ſenſe of their ſins, nor with the ſenſe of Gods benefits and favours beſtowed on them, as they ſhould, cannot be affected with the ſenſe of threatened judgments as is required, and cannot be affected with the ſenſe of the miſeries and mercies diſpenſed toward others, and cannot come up to the obedience of the Apoſtles precept, to rejoyce with them that rejoyce, and to mourn with them that mourn, which doth ſo afflict them, as they reckon this their condition altogether evil, and are near unto diſcouragment, becauſe of their apprehended hardneſſe of heart.

2. For remedy of this evil, 1. let the convert conſider, that the hardneſſe of heart whereof he complains, is not that hardneſſe of heart which the Scripture calleth hardneſſe of heart: For, the Scriptures do not charge any man of this ſin who lamenteth his ſinfulneſſe, but thoſe who do not acknowledge their ſins, and go on in them when they hear them reproved, miſ-regarding what God ſaith, commandeth, commendeth or threatneth. Mean time we do not deny, but thoſe in-lakes whereof the convert doth complain, are ſinfull defects of duty, and inclinations of corrupt nature unto hardneſſe of heart. But we deny, that this defect lamented, is charged in Scripture for hardneſſe of heart. 2. Let the convert conſider the difference between the evil whereof he complaineth, and the good gift of God pointing out that evil unto him, and making him to diſ-allow it and lament it, and he ſhall find his condition not altogether evil, but ſuch as he hath cauſe to be humbled in himſelf for it, and alſo to bleſſe God for

for discovering this defect, and making him lament it. 3. Let him consider, that his lamenting his coldrife affection to God and his small compassion toward men, is good and commendable; for this lamenting the defect, beareth witnesse of his will and desire toward the duty, and in effect is a part of the exercise of repentance, and of begun renovation of his heart. 4. Let him consider, that there may be made good use of this condition, both for the exercise of humility, because of felt defects of needfull graces, and also for the exercise of faith in Christ, by application of his imputed righteousnesse, which hideth the nakednesse of felt defects, and drawing vertue from Christ to sanctifie and renew the heart more and more. 5. And last of all, let the convert under the sense of this defect in his affection, study to bring forth the effects of those affections, that is to say, let him go about to do the work of a lover of God, in having respect to all his commandments, and to do the work of a compassionat affection toward men in misery of soul or body, and so what seems to him in-laking in his heart, shall be found forth-coming in his hand and actions for the greater glory to God and edification of his neighbour.

CHAP. XXI.

Concerning the converts despising of his own exercises of religion, because of his felt vanity of mind therein.

ALl true converts do agree in this principle, that God should be worshiped in spirit and truth, and that the more a man strive to be sincere and upright in his worship, the lesse can he comport with the sin which doth hinder his worship. When therefore a true convert doth perceive in himself so great levity of his thoughts, that in the very time of hearing Sermon, praying to God, or singing of Psalms, his mind runneth out to think of naughty and profane things, impertinent, idle and foolish maters, unworthy of his thoughts

thoughts at any time, but moſt untimous and ſinfull in the time of divine ſervice, he is ſo diſpleaſed with his condition, that he condemns all the ſervice and devotion he is about for the time, and caſts it away as altogether polluted; and if he find this ſickneſſe from day to day cleaving faſt unto him, he falleth in diſcouragement, and in queſtion with himſelf, whether it be better to break off at leaſt in ſecret, ſuch ragged worſhip, or to go on to offer the ſacrifice of a fool unto God: for, ſo he doth eſteem of his devotion, thus leavened, with vaiging and vanity of his mind.

In this caſe, the convert doth not only miſ-regard what is right in his devotion, or divine ſervice, but alſo by fretting, diſcouragment and miſ-behaviour of his ſpirit, is ready to augment his ſinfull condition, and to provoke the Lord to be wroth with him indeed.

2. For remedy of this evil, let the convert judge wiſely of his condition, that he charge not himſelf with guiltineſſe more then he ought to do, and that he may take a right courſe to be free of guiltineſſe, and healed of this ſickneſſe where guiltineſſe is found. And to this end, 1. let him put difference between vaiging of mind with interruption of worſhip, and the natural courſe of his phantaſie and underſtanding, which may conſiſt with the continued acts of worſhip; for, as the eyes of a man, running to ſome place, cannot chooſe but ſee every viſible thing in his way, and yet runneth on without ſtaying till he come to the place he aimeth at; So the phantaſie and underſtanding, cannot chooſe but take up, and diſcern whatſoever is offered unto them in time of prayer from the outward ſenſes, or from the memory, and yet make no interruption of prayer, ſuch is the natural agility of a mans mind; and therefore this natural courſe of imagination or phantaſie, muſt not be charged as guiltineſſe upon the worſhiper, who followeth on the work of worſhip notwithſtanding. 2. Sundry ſuggeſtions may be caſt into the converts mind by Sathan to marr his worſhip, which muſt be charged

charged on Sathan chiefly, and the worſhiper not alway made guilty thereby. 3. When the worſhip indeed is interrupted, and the mind falleth off from the work of devotion, or divine ſervice, and entereth upon diſcourſes about vain, vile, or impertinent maters; let the convert not only acknowledge guiltineſſe here, but alſo examine, if this his vaiging of mind in prayer and divine ſervice, be not alſo a chaſtiſement from God for his not acknowledging of God in his affairs, and and for looſing reins to his mind to roave all the day, which juſtly meeteth him at night in his devotion, as a rod on his back for his voluntar vaiging from God in his former walking.

3. Theſe conſiderations being premiſed, and the ſins which have drawn on this evil being diſcovered, and the power of indwelling-ſin perceived, and the power of Sathans temptations noticed, and the Lords chaſtiſeing rod juſtified, and his own culpable infirmity acknowledged; 1. Let him humble himſelf and flye to the rich grace of God offered in Chriſt, and lay ſtronger hold on the ſatisfaction made by Chriſt, and imputed to all believers in him, that guiltineſſe may be, by free pardon, removed. 2. Let him pray for more aſſiſtance of the holy Spirit in all the exerciſes of religion, and expect a gracious granting thereof, in Gods wiſe diſpenſation, of the meaſure of his grace in the uſe of holy Ordinances. 3. Let his heart be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, making him lift up his eyes from time to time to God in the midſt of his lawfull affairs, how mean ſo ever. 4. Let him gather his thoughts before every religious exerciſe, by way of preparation, leſt he take the name of the Lord in vain, by raſh and unreverent ruſhing in upon divine Service. 5. Let him thank the Lord for granting him grace to ſee his ſinfull vaiging of mind, and to be diſpleaſed with it, and to confeſſe it. 6. Let him be comforted in the Lord, who gathereth the ragged and ſcattered honeſt deſires of ſupplicants, and taketh away the iniquity of the ſervice of his

his clients, as our high Prieſt, bearing, in his appearing for us, as it were, on his fore-head, *Holineſs unto the Lord.*

CHAP. XXII.

Concerning the converts diſcouragment for felt want of ability to do the duties commanded, whereunto his renewed will is very bent.

SUndry true converts, finding a will to do that which is good, but not finding power how to perform that which is good, do fall in diſquietneſſe and diſcouragement when they ſhould go and ſeek to make good uſe of their infirmity, and go to Chriſt for remeed, as the Apoſtle did, *Rom.* 7. 18.

The cauſe of this evil is, the relicts of corrupt natural inclination to ſeek to be juſtified by works, and to have in our hand ability to do the good which we would do; for, albeit the convert be forced to ſeek reconciliation with God by remiſſion of ſins in his converſion, yet in his courſe toward heaven and ſalvation, he deſireth to have a ſtore-houſe and treaſure of ſtrength in himſelf, to be made uſe of as he willeth. For, it ſeemeth to him, in his carnal wiſdom, a poor ſhift to be, in every good action, put to beg ſupply from Chriſt by prayer, and to ſtand waiting on in a dependance on Chriſt, till furniture come from heaven unto him. Which furniture of ſtrength, becauſe our Lord doth ſuſpend to give, till his infirm and humble child hold up his heart as an empty veſſel to receive influence from him, according to his wiſe pleaſure, the inconſiderat convert doth trouble himſelf and falleth in a diſtemper.

2. This caſe is not altogether evil, as the convert doth take it; but this much is right, that he looks upon the Law as holy, ſpiritual and good, that he deſireth earneſtly to obey it, and that he loaths himſelf for his felt unconformity unto it: Yet, this is wrong in him, that he doth not humble himſelf, but is caſt down and diſ-

couraged

couraged, that he doth not make Christ his sanctifications as well as his righteousnesse, that he doth not consider of the furniture to be brought unto him from heaven by faith in Christ, and that this grace is nearer and more ready to serve his turn, then if it were in his own hand.

3. Therefore let him renounce more and more all confidence in his own righteousnesse, with the Apostle, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. let him thank God in Christ, in whom an out-gate is to be found in all difficulties, *Rom.* 7. 25: let him trust Christ for supply in all service, in whom if a man abide, he shall bring forth much fruit, and without whom he can do nothing, *Joh.* 15. 5. For, if he depend on Christ in his emptinesse and weakenesse, he shall find by experience, that when he is weakest, then is he strongest.

CHAP. XXIII.

Concerning the converts imprudent censure of himself for felt ingratitude.

SOme converts sometime, do passe rash sentence against themselves for ingratitude, namely when after receiving some notable benefit, for which they had made earnest supplication to God, and for which, before the receiving of the benefit, they had oblieged themselves by vow to a thankfull acknowledgment of the favour prayed for, they find themselves come short of their purposed, promised and hoped-for chearfulnesse and alacrity in praising and thanking the Lord; whereupon they not only fall in heavinesse, but also in a sort of indignation against themselves, and quarrellous complaining of their condition, and by this means, are so far from performing their vows, that by their imprudence they do involve themselves in no small guiltinesse: and for this distemper of mind and indignation against themselves, they conceive themselves to have just reason; partly, because they find their rejoycing in God, and

and thanksgiving to him, for the benefit received, nothing answerable to their earnest praying for it; partly, because the benefit received seems to them to have lost much of the estimation it had before they did receive it; partly, because they find even that small measure of joy, at the receiving of the benefit after some few dayes, to grow cold and likly to evanish. Hence doth suspicion begin to get footing in them, that for their ingratitude the Lord is angry with them, and hath bestowed the benefit on them, not in mercy but in wrath, and so they fall in the guiltinesse of ingratitude more and more.

2. For removing of this evil, five practical errors must be removed, which ordinarily concur in this sicknesse. The first is this, the afflicted, in his promising unto God to be thankfull, will be found to have had too much confidence in his own strength; trusting, that in his resolution, his heart could not but melt in the sense of the mercy granted. And this appeareth by his indignation against himself, when he findeth, that in his resolution his heart hath deceived him; as if he had expected the benefit from God, and the thanksgiving from himself; whereas he should have distinguished these two benefits, to wit, the gift prayed for, and the thanksgiving for it, and should have depended upon God for bestowing of both: for, the grace of thankfulnesse for a benefit asked and received, is greater then the benefit prayed for; which if the afflicted had considered well, he should have humbled himself before God for his not performance of his duty, rather then fallen in a proud quarrelling for his inability to be thankfull.

3. The second error is an unequal comparison between the desire he had to obtain the benefit, and the rejoycing in God for the benefit received; for, the desire to obtain the benefit, oft-times hath in it a great measure of natural and carnal appetite, and seeking of some part of self-perfection; but the rejoycing in God,

which the convert purpoſed to offer for the benefit, is ſpiritual. And we are much more inclined to ſeek theſe things which pertain to the commodity of this life, then to perform ſpiritual duties; So that it is not to be wondered at, when our deſires, in part natural, are not followed with equal affection ſpiritual.

4. The third error is, when the convert doth not put difference between the eſtimation of the benefit, and the joy in God for beſtowing of it, but meaſureth them with the ſame line, not conſidering that eſtimation is the act of the intellect and judgment, and that joy is the act of the affection; and both of them in this caſe exerciſed about divers obiects: the eſtimation reſpecting the benefit it ſelf, the affection of rejoycing in God who did beſtow it, reſpecting the giver of the benefit. Now the eſtimation of, and delighting in, the benefit, may be leſſe or more, while the eſtimation of Gods goodneſſe, in beſtowing of it, remaineth the ſame. And therefore, the convert ſhould not charge himſelf for lake of eſtimation of God and his gifts, albeit he feel much variety in the reſpective motions of his affections.

5. The fourth error is, when the convert counts all the eſtimation of, and thankſgiving for, the benefit, temporal or ſpiritual received, as nothing, becauſe it is not anſwerable to the worth of what is received, or to the kindneſſe of God who hath granted it: which reaſon, if it were of weight, there ſhould be no acceptable thankſgiving from any Saint on earth, during this preſent life; for, it is impoſſible that any meaſure of thankfulneſſe from men ſhould be found anſwerable to the cauſes of their thankfulneſſe, whether manifeſted in temporal or ſpiritual benefits. And therefore, upon this conſideration, the Pſalmiſt, *Pſ.* 116. 11. cryeth out, *What ſhall I render to the Lord, for all his benefits towards me?*

6. The fifth error is, when the convert taketh it for an evidence of an unthankfull mind, if the fervour of praiſing God, once kindled after the freſh receit of the mercy

mercy, ſhall after ſome time, ſeem to cool or decay; which if it were true, no room ſhould be left to any holy affection, except only to the expreſſion of joy for benefits received. But the truth is, that one duty muſt ſo be ſtudied, as other duties have their time and place alſo; for, we are commanded to rejoyce and tremble alſo, to rejoyce with them that rejoyce, and to mourn with them that mourn. Again we muſt acknowledge, that ſome expreſſions of thankfulneſſe becometh the convert upon the freſh receit of the benefit, which are not required to be alwayes afterward continued. We read of the impotent criple reſtored to his limbs by *Peter*, *Act.* 3.8. and that for joy, he leaped and cryed out; but no man would require of him that he ſhould alwayes thereafter have daunced and cryed out, and yet he might be found among the number of thankfull receivers of favour from God.

7. Theſe errors then being removed, let the convert, 1. with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſ.* 103. charge his ſoul to bleſſe God at all times, and to remember all his benefits, and not forget any of them, and to *confeſs* his obligation to God, which in the Scripture, and ſpecially in the *Pſalms*, is put for bleſſing, praiſing and thanking God; for, the word that ſignifieth in the Original to *confeſs* and *praiſe*, or *thank*, is oft-times one and the ſame. 2. Let him beg grace to be thankfull for benefits no leſſe earneſtly, then he doth beg the promiſed benefits themſelves. 3. Let him put the ſacrifices of thanks and praiſe in Chriſts hands, by whom the calves of our lips are made acceptable unto God. 4. Let the convert comfort himſelf, that in the life to come, he ſhall be taken up with praiſe and thankſ-giving to God for ever and ever.

CHAP. XXIV.

Concerning the converts imprudent censure of himself for his felt impatiency in bearing lesser troubles, after his patient bearing of greater troubles.

SUndry converts, when greater troubles do assault them, do humble themselves in the acknowledgement of their inability, and pray unto God for patience and strength to bear their burthen. But when lesser troubles surprize them, they are foyled and overcome by their passions. For example, in the smaller pains of body, loss of goods, injuries done to them unexpected, by word or deed; and here they fume and fret, and break forth in some expressions of impatiency. Whereupon, when they reflect, they are so far from humbling themselves and making right use thereof, that their indignation at themselves, and their fretting is increased so much the more, as the cause of their impatiency was so small, as common reason found in heathens hath overcome, and therefore should have been more easily digested by Christians. This mis-carriage useth oft-times to be past-by, without any fruit further then to acknowledge their infirmity.

2. But the true cure of this evil, is in discovery and removal of the causes thereof, which are three, 1. Carnal confidence of the convert in his own strength, as able to overcome lesser troubles. 2. Neglect of duty toward God in his rencounter with smaller provocations of passion; for, men in great troubles and weighty crosses, use to flye unto God by prayer to help them to bear the same, but when they meet with lesser crosses, they oppose their own strength unto them, and puts not up the mater to God, and so their infirmity is manifested. 3. Gods wise correcting his child for miskening of him in lightest maters.

3. Therefore let the convert afflicted in this case, acknowledge his failing, and be humbled at the sight of his

his paſſionat infirmity, and bleſſe God for bearing down by his rod carnal ſelf-confidence. 2. Let him learn of *David*, Pſ. 141. 3. not to truſt in his own ſtrength in any thing, but depend on God for ſetting a watch before his mouth, and keeping the door of his lips, and mainly for keeping his heart from inclining to any evil thing. 3. Let him make more uſe both of Chriſts open fountain for waſhing away ſin and uncleanneſſe, and of his aſſiſtance to mortifie the deeds of corrupt nature by his Spirit: for, otherwayes the convert may look to be oftener foyled in this kind, and oftener to be corrected for not watching over his paſſions.

CHAP. XXV.

Concerning the converts miſtaking his caſe for want of ſuch a ſubmiſſion unto Gods exerciſing of him, as he would have.

SOme true converts, ſometime eſteem themſelves guilty of rebellion againſt God, becauſe they cannot ſubmit themſelves in bodily or ſpiritual chaſtiſements unto Gods diſpenſation, as they would. The pretended reaſons of their hard ſentence againſt themſelves, are three, 1. becauſe they find in themſelves fretting and murmuring againſt the Lords dealing with them. 2. They find themſelves far from humbling themſelves under the mighty hand of God. 3. Becauſe they find in themſelves ſtill unquietneſſe after they ſet themſelves to ſubmit; which endeavour to ſubmit, they conceive ſhould have brought forth quietneſſe of mind, if it had been real, and ſincere ſubmiſſion indeed. And theſe thoughts, when they have weight, make way for many ſuggeſtions of Sathan, and do draw on more and more unquietneſſe and guiltineſſe withall.

For remedy whereof, 1. let it be conſidered, that in this exerciſe a difference muſt be put between Gods part, the fleſh, or corrupt natures part, the new creatures part, and Sathans part.

As for Gods part, by his chastisements and exercising of his child, he brings to light the perverseness of corrupt nature in his child, to humble him and drive him to Christ. The part of flesh or corrupt nature, is alwayes to strive against the work of grace and the new creature, and it cannot be submissive unto God, *Gal.* 5. 7. but must be mortified, *Rom.* 8. 7. The part of the new creature, is not to consent to the fretting and murmuring of the flesh, but to oppose it, to yield unto Gods dispensation, and to be grieved for the power of corrupt nature, and therefore not the new creature but corrupt nature should be condemned. Sathans part is, still to take advantage of every hard exercise, and to suggest wrong thoughts of God and his work, in the child of God.

Secondly, let a difference be made between the conflict of corrupt nature against the work of grace, and the victory of the corrupt nature; for, corrupt nature may fight, and not prevail, but be keeped from reigning in a man, how much soever it rage.

Thirdly, let a difference be made between the victory of corrupt nature in some *conflicts*, and its victory in *the war*; for, corrupt nature may prevail in sundry conflicts, and yet loss its labour in the close of the war, wherein grace is made perfectly victorious through Christ, in hope whereof, the child of God must renew the combat against nature and not faint.

Fourthly, let a difference be put between submission of mind and quietness in mind. Submission may be sincere, when pain of body maketh the convert to cry, when affliction maketh him a man of sorrow and grief; yea, when corrupt nature doth fret and murmur, provided that the convert control and condemn his corrupt nature, and suffer it not to break forth in words of impatiency, but prayeth to God to help him to bear the burthen and endure his exercise with patience.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, let a difference be put between the sinfulnesse of corrupt nature and the trouble which doth stir it up, and the sorrow which the convert hath in the observation of both; for, the sin is the work of the flesh and Sathan, the trouble and affliction is the work of God, the sorrow for sin felt, is the work of Gods Spirit also; and the sorrow for pain, loss, shame, or any sort of trouble, is moderat and sanctified when the convert offereth himself willing to endure it, so long as God shall be pleased to continue it. Last of all, let it be considered, that a wrestled-for submission, pleaseth God no lesse, then a victorious submission doth please the convert, because in wrestling against corrupt nature, the convert testifieth his will to please God, his glorifying of Gods wisdom, justice, power and love, how ever the Lord deal with him. After which wrestling, the Lord doth give submission victorious, and quietnesse with it.

CHAP. XXVI.

Concerning the converts mistaking of his condition because of tentations.

GOds children oft-times are not only heavy and grieved because of tentations (which the Apostle, 1 *Pet.* 1.6. presupposeth to be ordinary, and in some respects needfull) but also fall in a mistaking of their condition, as if it were altogether evil and displeasant unto God, because they perceive themselves many wayes polluted in their conflict with them. Which pollutions, albeit they cannot be denyed to be pollutions, and should not be excused, or extenuat, yet should not darken or obscure the grace of God in a convert striving against tentations, and lamenting his pollutions contracted by occasion of them.

2. These tentations, that they may be the more clearly discovered, we shall divide them in three sorts. 1. some of them are directly from God, in a wise and

holy manner, for tryall and exercise of faith, hope, charity and other graces, and do not in any way tempt men to sin. 2. Some are from the flesh and the world, alluring or inducing men to sin; which two we joyn together, because concupiscence or the flesh, or corrupt nature, joyneth it self with the world, and these two help one another, and therefore are joyned together by the Apostle, 1 *Joh.* 2. 16. *All that is in the world is the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.* And when men are tempted by their own lusts, the world doth furnish objects, allurements and inducements to sin. The third sort are, the tentations from Sathan, who beside that he is not idle to take advantage of concupiscence and the worlds inducements, so is he chiefly busie to throw his fiery darts against the convert, and to sollicit men to such sins as the convert doth most detest and abhor.

As for the first sort of tentations from God, they are ordinarily by afflictions bodily or spiritual, wherein oft-times the converts do not observe the Lords purpose and will revealed in Scripture, or are forgetfull of the admonitions and consolations which they have heard from Scripture, which was the case of the afflicted Saints, *Heb.* 12. 5. and so they are more vexed then they should be; and, (*Ps.* 42. 11.) dejected and disquieted, and do suspect that God is angry with them and with the way they walk in, *Heb.* 12. 12, 13.

Of this sickness, there may be three causes, 1. the bitterness of affliction for the present time wherein it is felt. 2. The sense of by-past sin which the afflicted doth suspect God is pursuing, and making him possesse the sins of his youth, *Job.* 13. 26. The third, is the observation of in-born corruption, discovered unto the afflicted much more then in prosperity.

4. For remedy of this evil, let the afflicted convert perswade himself from the Word of God, that in all the afflictions of Gods children, the Lord doth intend the tryall and exercise and increase of faith, and other graces

graces beſtowed on them. And upon this conſideration, the afflicted ſhould rejoyce in this exerciſe, *Jam.* 1. 2, 3. Secondly, let him remember, that with the tryall of faith, there is alwayes a diſcovery of infirmity and corruption of nature in the afflicted: As in the purifying of gold, both the good mettal and the droſſe are diſcovered, which as he ſhould acknowledge, that he may be keeped from fretting, So muſt he ſtill remember, that the Lord doth intend the tryal of his faith, that he may be conſtant in believing on Chriſt, the only help and relief from ſin and miſery. Thirdly, in whatſoever condition he is in, let him endeavour to go on in patience, experience and hope, which ſhall never make him aſhamed, for this doth the Lord teach us, *Rom.* 5. 3, 4. and *Jam.* 1. 4.

As for the ſecond ſort of tentations, from the concupiſcence of the fleſh and from the worlds allurements and terror, let the convert afflicted follow the ſame courſe which is preſcribed in the remedy of the tentations of the firſt ſort.

As for the third ſort of tentations, which are from the devil tempting men to atheiſm, or blaſphemy, or diſpair, or ſelf-murder, and ſuch like, which even nature doth abhor, whereof ſomething is ſpoken elſewhere, 1. let the afflicted convert put difference between the devils ſin in tempting to vile ſins, and his own ſeeming feeble reſiſting, wherein albeit he thinketh himſelf polluted, yet his not yielding teſtifieth his diſſenting from thoſe fearfull ſins whereunto Sathan doth tempt him. 2. Let him put difference between the conſent of his unmortified corrupt nature inclinable to every evil, from the luſt of the ſpirit which fighteth againſt the luſt of the fleſh, which hindereth the adverſary from getting the victory. 3. Let him put difference between the ſufficiency of Gods grace upholding him in the conflict, and the full victory againſt the meſſenger of Sathan buffetting him: for, God uſeth to ſuſſpend the victory for a time, and yet make his grace

ſufficiently

ſufficiently uphold his ſouldier till the victory be given, as *Paul's* experience, 2 *Cor.* 12. teacheth us. And indeed, it is a pleaſant ſpectacle to the Lord to look upon his weak child ſtriving againſt the fleſh, the world and Sathan, and *ſtanding out* by faith in Chriſt againſt them all. 4. Let him conſider, that by theſe tentations of Sathan unto vile ſins, God can, and doth mortifie ſin, and make his child watchfull and ſtrong againſt both the ſinfull inclination unto theſe and all other ſins. In the mean time, let him beware of a more ſlye and ſubtile tentation, which Sathan uſeth to ſlide in at the back of theſe ugly and groſſe tentations; which is this, when he hath preſſed with all violence theſe fiery darts and vile ſuggeſtions upon the convert, he chargeth the afflicted ſoul with a giving conſent unto them, and like a ſcolding calumniator impudently beareth guiltineſſe upon him, and all to make him apprehend his condition to be worſe then it is, and to ſuſpect, that God, by this exerciſe, is purſuing him in wrath; and this tentation is not readily obſerved by the afflicted convert, but yielded vnto more then to the groſſe tentation. Therefore, in the laſt place, let the convert guard againſt this tentation which brangleth his faith, and lay the blame, with the Apoſtle, on corrupt nature, whatſoever guiltineſſe is found, *Rom.* 7. 17. *Now then it is no more I that doth it, but ſin that dwelleth in me*; a ſpeech beſeeming a man free of out-breaking and prevailing corruption, and ſtriving againſt all inward motions of corrupt nature. And for remedy of this and other evils, let him renew the acts of his faith in Chriſt, laying hold upon the covenant of Grace, that he may more confidently draw near unto God reconciled in Chriſt, and ſo no more doubt of Gods good will to him, notwithſtanding of his hard exerciſe under tentations: for, thus Sathan ſhall not only flye from the firſt tentation, being reſiſted, but alſo be diſappointed of the ſucceſſe he expected in queſtioning the converts condition and weakening of his faith.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

Concerning the converts miſtaking his condition when he doth obſerve ſome degrees of Gods deſerting of him.

TO ſpeak of the ſorts and degrees of Gods deſerting a ſoul, requireth a large Treatiſe, and the caſe and cure thereof is already publickly ſet forth by a learned and godly Preacher of the Goſpel. It ſhall ſuffice, for our purpoſe, to ſpeak of it only ſo far as it concerneth the converts miſtaking his condition when he apprehendeth himſelf deſerted, whether the deſertion be reall or apparent only, and falleth into ſuſpicion of Gods love to him, or that God is diſpleaſed with him, becauſe he findeth not ſuch lively influence of Gods Spirit as he hath found, and ſuch aſſiſtance of his gracious preſence as he did expect in diſcharge of religious duties, or exerciſes wherein divine providence hath yoked him. The Scripture and daily experience do furniſh inſtances of ſad complaints of the Lords hiding his face and withdrawing or with-holding of light or peace, or conſolation, or ſtrength and ability for ſpirituall duties, *&c.*

2. For remedy whereof, 1. let the convert remember, that God doth not leave a believer fled to Chriſt for relief from ſin and miſery, alwayes and for ever, but for a ſhort time, and that he keepeth love to them conſtantly, albeit he do hide the tokens of his love ſometime, and diſpoſe of the acts of his love, as he ſeeth fit for the advantage of the work of grace in them. Let him put difference between deſertion and the gift of diſcerning of the deſertion: for, albeit deſertion be of it ſelf a ſad viſitation, yet the ſight and obſervation of it, teſtifieth Gods preſence with his child, giving eye-ſalve and light; and thereby doth not only teach that wound to be curable, but alſo that the Phyſician is begun the cure of it, by pancing and lancing the wound. 3. Let him not count it a deſertion, when God in any ſervice whereunto

whereunto he puts his child, emptieth him of all conceit of his own ability, that he may open his mouth wyd and be filled: for this empeying of the convert, is the very fitting of him for freſh ſupply from Chriſt to go about the ſervice in Chriſts ſtrength and furniture, which the Apoſtle felt by experience, 2 *Cor.* 12. 10. *When I am weak*, ſaith he, *then I am ſtrong*. Poverty of ſpirit, and hunger and thriſt for righteouſneſſe, are not to be counted deſertions. 4. Let him obſerve the degrees of Gods preſence, no leſſe then the degrees of his abſence, as the Pſalmiſt did when he recollected himſelf, *Pſ.* 73. 23. after the tentation which troubled him was overcome. *Nevertheleſſe, I am continually with thee. Thou holdeſt me by thy right hand*, and *ver.* 26. *my fleſh and my heart faileth, but God is the ſtrength of my heart and my portion for ever.* 5. Let him put a right conſtruction upon Gods diſpenſation, believing alwayes, that God doth what he doth for good to his afflicted ſubject; whether he draw forth, by his deſertion, the latent-corruption of the heart, as he did to *Ezekiah*, 2 *Chron.* 32. 31. or whether to prevent out-breaking of corruption, as he did to the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7, 8, 9. or whether to exerciſe his faith, love and patience, and to ſharpen his prayer, as he did to the Pſalmiſt frequently. And therefore, let him, in the obſervation of whatſoever degree of deſertion, humble himſelf before God, flye in more cloſely unto Chriſt, and patiently wait upon the change of his conditon, in the uſe of the means, and following the duties of his calling as the Lord ſhall enable him: for, this is the counſell of the Lord, *Iſa.* 50. 10. *Who is he among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that walketh in darkneſſe and hath no light? let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God.* And this much ſufficeth for inſtances of the third ſort of the converts miſtaking his condition.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Concerning caſes, wherein the convert is in doubt what to determine about his condition.

IT reſteth, that we ſpeak of the fourth ſort of caſes of the conſcience of the convert, wherein he is at a ſtand, and in doubt what to determine of his preſent condition.

2. In theſe doubtfull caſes, the convert is not properly deceived, as in the former ranks of caſes it is preſuppoſed of him; becauſe in this ſort of caſes, the convert doth not poſitively determine the queſtion wherein he is fallen, but ſtandeth in doubt what to reſolve upon.

3. Caſes of this ſort pertain to the mind and judgement of the convert, and if his judgment be cleared by looſing of the queſtion, incontinent he is ſatisfied and quiet.

4. It is neceſſar for the converts clearing, that he form the queſtion rightly; and to this end, 1. let him conſider his caſe and condition in himſelf, ſo accuratly as he can. 2. Let him ingenuouſly lay forth the queſtion or doubt he hath, before his Paſtor or Chriſtian friend, acquainted with caſes of conſcience, and ask their judgement what to think of, or what to do in, ſuch a caſe. The reaſon why he muſt examine narrowly his own condition, before he ſpeak of it to another, is partly becauſe otherwayes his doubt or queſtion may prove frivolous and unworthy of an anſwer; partly, becauſe the convert, after examination of his caſe and prayer unto God, may find ſatisfaction to his doubt; and partly, becauſe, if his doubt remain, the queſtion may be the more clearly propounded, and ſo receive the more clear and ſpeedy anſwer for his ſatisfaction.

5. Of this ſort of queſtions, we ſhall propound ſome examples and give ſome reſolution unto them, whereof uſe may be made when ſuch like queſtions ſhall occur.

The

The first question shall be, concerning confusion of mind.

IT cometh to passe sometime, when a convert is upon examination of his own estate or condition, that such a mist and darknesse falleth on his mind, and such a croud and throng of thoughts within him, that he can discern nothing but mist, multitude of thoughts, and darknesse and confusion. The question is, what shall he think or do, for removing of this confusion of thoughts and darknesse of mind?

Ans. This case befalleth converts frequently, and therefore had need to be the more carefully cured: Which cure, that it may the better go on, let the afflicted renew the examination of his former behaviour, and see if he can find out the meritorious cause thereof in himself; for, this case oft-times is the castigation of the afflicted, for his former negligence and omission of duties, or slight discharge of religious worship: yea, it may be found possibly, that the afflicted hath been so careless in keeping his heart in the fear of God, that he hath involved himself too far in earthly and thorny affairs, or hath exceeded in the use of things lawfull, or by some corrupt communication, hath grieved the Lords spirit, and so hath drawn on some desertion and with-drawing of illumination from him.

2. This case may also fall out, from some present perturbation of mind and passion, whereby his reason is so taken up for the time, that it cannot discharge its duty: as cometh to passe usually in anger or fear, or grief, or some such like passion as may be seen, when a man is injured by his neighbour, or doth meet with some damnage, or is put in fear of some imminent evil coming on him, or findeth sharp pains of body, or some such like cause perplexing him. The question is, what shall he think of this condition?

Ans. If the afflicted shall examine how he is fallen in this case, and shall, in consideration of his weaknesse, be

be humbled before God by prayer, he ſhall not want clearneſſe of mind, and directions from God what to do and how to behave himſelf, in ordering of his converſation aright, *Pſ.* 50. 23. for, the Lord gives wiſdom liberally, to all that ask it of him in faith, *Jam.* 1. 5. and this his preſent condition giveth him an errand to God.

The ſecond queſtion is, concerning the convert, who moſt part walketh heavily.

THere are ſome true converts, who after examination of themſelves, cannot deny, but their heart is toward the wayes of God in their calling, and that as they find the imperfections of their ſervice, ſo they are forced to renounce all confidence in their own righteouſneſſe, and to flye to the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, as the only true garment able to hide their nakedneſſe; yet, they are for the moſt part heavy in their ſpirit, ſeldom they rejoyce, but many times they weep; and howſoever they maintain confidence in Chriſt for *the ſtate* they ſtand into, yet, when they conſider their ordinar heavineſſe of heart, they doubt what to think of this their *ſad condition.*

Anſ. This condition, if well conſidered, is very uſefull, albeit not alwayes comfortable; for, the Lords diſpenſation toward ſuch a perſon thus exerciſed, is well tempered and wiſely mixed: for, he neither ſuffereth the heavy in heart to caſt away his confidence in Chriſt, nor to be idle and unfruitfull in his vocation, nor to glory in his own works, or put confidence in them, but ſo keepeth him up to the duty of more and more eſteeming of Chriſts righteouſneſſe, and drawing of ſtrength from him by faith, that he goeth on in his courſe uprightly, albeit not fed as he would be by the conſolations of the holy Ghoſt.

2. For remedy whereof, let him quiet his mind; for, after examination of his own natural inclination, he ſhall find the reaſon of the Lords diſpenſation toward him, ſparingly

ſparingly giving unto him ſuch meaſure of conſolation as he would have, to be this, leaſt he ſhould abuſe the ſame, and lean more to the ſenſible feeling thereof then to the word of faith: and therefore, however he find heavineſſe of heart through manyfold tentations, let him hold on his way in the obedience of faith, he ſhall after a whiles patience and wreſtling, meet with as much peace and conſolation as may ſuffice a pilgrim, walking from ſtrength to ſtrength till he appear before God in heaven, where all tears ſhall be wiped away from his eyes. Mean time, let this ground be holden faſt, that God mixeth the cup of his own children as he findeth it fit for their edification.

The third queſtion is, concerning the converts, who for not looking on their originall ſin and the out-breakings thereof, are in doubt what to think of their former condition.

SOme converts are, who after a quiet poſſeſſion of peace injoyed in a blameleſſe converſation among men, and in the exerciſes of religion uprightly before God, after examination of their condition more narrowly, do find, that the conſcience for a long time hath been ſilent, and hath not changed for the motions of original ſin, but ſuffered them to go on ſecurely under the guiltineſſe of the daily ſprouting forth thereof. In this caſe, as they dare not caſt away their confidence in Chriſt, nor their holy purpoſe of walking uprightly before God; So they cannot juſtifie the ſilence of their conſcience, which hath ſuffered the motions of ſin (although not conſented unto) to go away without challenge or reckoning made for them, and here they are in ſtraits, and doubt what to judge of their own condition.

Anſ. In this caſe, the ſilence of the conſcience is not to be excuſed: And the peace of the convert albeit it may be ſound, in order to the converts *ſtate* in grace, yet the condition wherein he is, is not good, but mixed with

with much ſecurity; for, to make the condition of a convert to be good, it is not only required, that his conſcience be keeped free from groſſe pollutions, but alſo that he be daily aiming at mortifying of ſin, and that to this end, he daily give an account unto God of his wandering and vanity, and of the obſerved outſproutings of the bitter root of original ſin, that he may, after his beſt behaviour, perceive a neceſſity of that prayer, taught us by our Lord for daily remiſſion of ſins, and ſo may daily have the anſwer of God from the Evangel, ſaying, *Son, be of good cheer, thy ſins are forgiven unto thee*: For, there is a twofold abſolution of the convert, one is in order to his perſon, which Chriſt calleth *the waſhing of the whole man*, the other is in order to his daily imperfections and blemiſhes of his converſation, which Chriſt doth call *the waſhing of the feet*. By vertue of the firſt ſort of abſolution, the child of God, flying to Chriſt, is judicially declared free from condemnation; by the other, the believer, making uſe of the fountain opened up in Chriſt, is exeemed from his acknowledged uncleanneſſe. This is clear from Chriſts words, *Joh.* 13. 10. Mean time we confeſſe, that the motions of ſin in our mortal bodies are ſo innumerable, that no man can overtake them, yet muſt they be counted for an heap at leaſt, as *David* doth teach us, *Pſ.* 19. 12. *Who knoweth the errors of his life? cleanſe me from my ſecret ſins.* And this ſame leſſon doth the Apoſtle teach us, *Rom.* 7. 24. *Wretched man that I am*, ſaith he, *who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jeſus Chriſt.* Wherefore, let the convert go on in his former godly and righteous behaviour and converſation, not miſ-regarding the ſproutings of original ſin, but giving account thereof unto Chriſt, as ſaid is, that he may glorifie that righteouſneſſe of Chriſt by faith, and injoy peace with God, not only in order to his *ſtate*, but alſo in order to his *condition* daily,

The fourth question is, how the convert may know and be certain of his justification.

WHen the true convert heareth the different opinions of Theologues, concerning the act of justification of a believer, some saying, that it is an act of God *immanent*, whereby he willeth the absolution of the believer; some saying, that it is an act of God *emanent* and *transient* from God upon the spirit of the believer; some saying it is the sentence of the Judge, absolving the believing sinner from the curse of the law. The believer here possibly is at a stand, and knoweth not how to answer the question till his doubt be looſed.

For the satisfaction of the convert, first, we may safely say, that it is not material whether the convert be able to take up the quiddity and formal notion of the act of iustification, provided he be a believer in Christ and know that the believer in Christ is justified before God, and that being justified by faith, he hath peace with God, and can apply these truths unto himself, in the exercise of repentance and new obedience. But if possibly, the convert cannot be satisfied till his doubt be answered, let him consider, that he must distinguish between justification actively taken as it proceedeth from God, and justification passively taken as it is terminat on the justified man; as it is taken actively, these four things are to be distinguished, 1. Gods eternal will and decree, to absolve from sin and wrath every believer in Christ. 2. Gods actual revealing in time this his gracious pleasure in the Gospel. 3. Gods judicial application of this general sentence to the believer in the point of his conversion, whether the believer perceive his absolution or not for the time. 4. There is a sensible intimation of this sentence unto the believer, joyned with peace and joy, which the Apostle calleth the shedding abroad of the love of God in the heart, *Rom.* 5. 5. and the sealing of the holy Ghost

stamping

ſtamping the heart with holineſſe, *Epheſ.* 1. 13. The firſt three makes the abſolution of the believer certain; whether the believer thinks ſo or not; but the fourth, which is the ſenſible intimation of this ſentence, doth make the believer both ſure and joyfull.

As juſtification is taken paſſively, four things may be diſtinguiſhed in the believer juſtified. The firſt is, his actual receiving of Chriſt, offered in the Goſpel for a perfect remedy of ſin and miſery. The ſecond is, the Lords judicial ſetling of the general ſentence of abſolution upon the believer, as if he had ſpoken to him by name, as he did to the Apoſtles, *Joh.* 15. 3. *Now are ye clean through the word I have ſpoken unto you*, that is, you are clean from the guilt of ſin by my abſolving of you. The third is, the believers obſerving, in a reflect act of his conſcience, that he hath fled to Chriſt for abſolution, and therefore juſtified indeed. The fourth is, the feeling and obſerving of the teſtimony of the holy Ghoſt bearing witneſſe with his ſpirit, that he is a child of God abſolved from ſin and wrath. The firſt two of theſe, to wit, the act of faith, receiving of Chriſt and of the right made by Chriſt to the believer in him of his abſolution, may be in, and on the believer without the other two, to wit, his obſervation of the act of faith, and the felt intimation of this work of grace by the holy Spirit.

2. For ſolving of the doubt then; as juſtification is actively taken, as proceeding from the immanent act of Gods eternal purpoſe and decree to juſtifie the believer, it is no more the actual juſtification in this life, of which we are ſpeaking, then the immanent act of Gods eternal purpoſe to raiſe the bodies of believers in Chriſt, and to glorifie them in ſoul and body, can be called the actual reſurrection of their bodies, and glorification of both ſoul and body in this life.

But the tranſient act of juſtification in a judicial way, which is the Lords judicial ſentence of abſolution of the believer, declared by his Word, ſet down now in holy

Scripture, it is indeed and formally the believers justification, and is judicially terminat upon every believer in the act of his conversion, whether the believer doth clearly perceive his own conversion, or be in suspicion of his being reconciled and justified.

And this may be made to appear, if we compare the condemnation of the unbeliever with the absolution of the believer fled to Christ, *Joh.* 3. 18. As he that believeth not in Christ is condemned already, because the curse of the law and condemnation, pronounced in the Scripture by God, the soveraign Judge, stands against him so long as he doth not believe in the only begotten Son of God: And this sentence standeth fast, whether the unbeliever take notice of this sentence or not, whether he do apply it to himself or not, do find grief for it or not: So the believer in Christ is relaxed from condemnation and absolved, and hath right unto eternal life and begun possession of it, albeit for the time of his infancy, tentation, trembling and fear, it be not so, albeit he doth not perceive the blessed change of his state, nor doth lay to heart, as he might, the words of Christ judicially pronouncing the sentence, comprehending him as certainly as if his name were expressed, *Joh.* 3. 18. *He that believeth on him, is not condemned,* and *ver.* 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,* and *Joh.* 6. from *ver.* 37. to 41. Hence we conclude, that the formal act of justification of a man fled to Christ, is to be found in the written sentence of the judge absolving every believer and the man we speak of.

There is another transient act of God, in an actual revelation of justification, wherein the holy Ghost openeth the eyes of the believer to behold and perceive the gift of faith already bestowed on him: Of this speaks the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. And after that the holy Ghost hath pointed out his own grace, bestowed on the believer, he followeth his work, by giving remarkable peace and joy as earnest of life everlasting, whereof

whereof the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, *Epheſ.* 1. 13. *In whom ye alſo truſted, after ye heard the word of truth, the Goſpel of your ſalvation: in whom alſo, after ye had believed, ye were ſealed with the ſpirit of promiſe, which is the earneſt of our inheritance.* Therefore, he that deſireth to have the intimation of his juſtification, after flying for refuge unto Chriſt for relief of felt ſin and feared wrath, muſt read his abſolution in the Goſpel, as well as he hath read, before that, his condemnation in the law. Unto which ſentence of abſolution, let him hold faſt in his daily endeavour after ſanctification.

The fifth queſtion is, how to ſatisfie the convert who findeth himſelf purſued for his ſins after remiſſion believed, and is brought in queſtion what to judge of his caſe.

MAny converts have fallen in *Jobs* caſe, and ſeemed to themſelves to poſſeſſe the ſins of their youth, *Job*, 13. 26. For, after converſion and felt reconciliation, they find the ſins they did repent of, and did believe to be forgiven through Chriſt, objected to them afreſh, purſued with ſharp accuſations, and ſigns of wrath joyned therewith. Their reconciliation and righteouſneſſe through Chriſt, they purpoſe to hold faſt; their old guiltineſſe, and ſentence of their conſcience writing bitter things againſt them, they cannot deny: The pinch is here, either the remiſſion they did believe is null, or the challenge is unjuſt, do they reaſon with themſelves; the nullity of their remiſſion they dare not admit, and the juſt ground of challenge they cannot deny, and the doubt what to think of this caſe they cannot ſhun, not ſeeing, how theſe things can conſiſt and ſtand together.

2. For anſwer to this doubt, theſe four things muſt be diſtinguiſhed, and how they may all conſiſt one with another, muſt be timouſly conſidered. The four things to be diſtinguiſhed are, 1. the reconciliation of a convert with God; 2. the remiſſion of the reconciled

mans sins freely gifted unto him by God; 3. a renewed bitter accusation raised by Sathan against the reciled convert; 4. The holy and wise dispensation of God, permitting & ordering these renewed accusations of his child by Sathan, for the tryal and exercise of his faith and growth of his repentance, and other good ends.

Now for the consistence of these four, we need not doubt, but the accuser of the brethren can cast up to us forgiven sins, and bear upon us that they are not forgiven. Neither need we doubt, but God in wisdom and love to his children, may suffer Sathan to renew accusations against them, and so order that mater, as neither Sathan shall prevail, nor his child suffer damnage by the means: for, there is a great difference betweeen Sathans renewing of accusations for sins forgiven, and Gods making null the remission granted, the Lord can suffer the one to be, but the other he will never suffer to be: for, when a true convert groweth negligent, and falleth in such sins after conversion as he lived in before conversion, no wonder Sathan be permitted to call his former conversion in question; yea, the Lord may justly cast up to his child his former faults, to humble him and shame him from going on, albeit he doth not disannull the formerly granted remission.

3 When thanksgiving for remission of sin, granted for Christs cause, beginneth to cool in the heart of a convert, what wonder the Lord not only suffer, but also present the vilenesse of by-past sins to make the convert sensible of the remission, and to cause him renew the acts of repentance and godly sorrow for his sins by-past, as, *Ezek.* 16. 63. and 36. 32: *Then shall you remember your own evil wayes and your doings which were not good, and shall loath your selves for your iniquities and abominations.*

When the convert groweth remisse in watching over his own heart & wayes, and is in danger of falling back into these sins which he had repented of before, what wonder the Lord by remembring him of his natural

inclination

inclination and former wayes, do warn him of his danger to make him preveen his fall?

4. Wherefore, let the convert maintain the ſolidity of former remiſſion of ſins, and make good uſe of his former ſins which went before his converſion, and let him follow the example of *Paul*, who did not ſuffer his former ſins go out of his mind, but did renew the confeſſion of them upon all occaſions for his own daily humiliation, for the edification of others, and for magnifying the glory of the grace of God, and yet for all this, did not ſuſpect the remiſſion of ſins received: For, by this means the convert ſhall preveen accuſations, and ſtop Sathans mouth, and make his accuſations have no force. By this means, the convert ſhall poſſeſſe firm and ſtable confidence of Gods unchangeable grace and mercy, and of the ſtability of the remiſſion of ſin granted.

The ſixth queſtion is, of a convert caſten, not only in an uncertainty for the time of his converſion, but alſo in a doubt whether he be elected or not, and knows not how to do in this caſe.

SOme converts fall in *Heman* the Ezrait his exerciſe, whereof we read, *Pſ.* 88. eſpecially, *ver.* 14, 15 *While I ſuffer thy terrors I am diſtracted*, ſaith he. Counſell hath been offered by ſome to the afflicted, to follow the practice and experience of ſome eminent Theologues, who being brought to ſuch ſtraits with good ſucceſſe, have ſubmitted themſelves to God, to ſave them or deſtroy them as he pleaſed; after which ſubmiſſion, they have felt the marvellous ſweet embracements of Gods loving kindneſſe, making them ſure both of their converſion and election. Whether to follow this example and experience of ſome notable Saints, is the doubt, wherein the convert is not clear, and knoweth not how to carry himſelf toward God in this caſe.

2. For answer to this question: It is free for God to comfort a soul castен down, when, and how, he pleaseth; it is free for God to passe by the infirmity and error of a terrified soul, coming to him not in the wisest way prescribed to him, and to look to the necessity of the mans consolation, and not to his way of seeking of it. But, howsoever it pleaseth God to comfort some extraordinarily, yet this is not the duty of the afflicted to come with such an unrequired submission unto God: for, it limiteth the Lord, in a manner, either to comfort the man speedily, or suffer him upon apparent refusal for the time, to dispair: For, Gods order is to bring the sinner under the sense of sin and acknowledgment of deserved wrath for sin, and then to charge him to believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and after believing in Christ, to seal the believer with the stamp of holinesse and the earnest-penny of the inheritance, which is peace with God, and joy in the holy Ghost shed abroad in his heart.

3. Wherefore, as for the conversion of a man straitned in the pains of the new birth and fear of everlasting wrath, and tempted to suspect that he is not elected: It is a more safe way to lay aside all disputation about Gods decree (because secret things belong to the Lord) and to look to the Lords command, and to his own duty of flying unto Christ: So for the recovery of a convert, fallen in *Jonahs* case, and made to suspect, that he is a reprobat cast off of God, it is a more safe way not to dispute for the time, either his election or conversion, whatsoever suggestions may be cast in by Sathan, then to offer unto God an absolute submission to be saved or destroyed as he pleaseth, and then to lye in sorrow till God give an answer of consolation: for, God doth not require such a submission, but calleth for an act of faith and obedience; for, God hath declared in his Word, that he delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but that he should repent and turn to God and be saved. Secondly, in this submission the heart will be found

deceitfull

deceitfull, which neither will nor can ſubmit to be deſtroyed. Thirdly, this offer of ſuch a ſubmiſſion as this is, [Lord, I know not whether thou haſt choſen me or rejected me in thy decree, but I ſubmit my ſelf to thee abſolutely. If thou wilt deſtroy me, thou ſhalt be found to be juſt, and I do confeſſe ſo much unto thee; but if thou wilt ſave me, I ſhall proclame thy grace] ſuch a ſubmiſſion, I ſay, is but in effect, a tempting of God ſpeedily to reveal his ſecret counſel, either by conſolation, if the ſubmitter be an elect, or refuſal of conſolation, if he be a reprobat. The only ſafe way in the foreſaid caſe, is to be humbled before God, and flye to Chriſt by prayer, (as *Heman* did, *Pſ.* 88. and as *Jonah* did, who chooſed to look again to his holy Temple, where the Mediator ſat upon the mercy ſeat between the cherubims) and not ſuffer ſuch a thought as reprobation. Thus did *Heman*, *Pſ.* 88. 13, 14. *But unto thee have I cryed, O Lord, and in the morning ſhall my prayer prevent thee: Lord, why caſteſt thou off my ſoul, why hideſt thou thy face from me.* Let the command of God to every ſelf-condemned ſinner, to believe in Chriſt, prevail againſt all temptations to the contrair; 1 *Joh.* 3.23. *This is his commandment, that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt.*

The ſeventh queſtion is, how to ſatisfie the convert, doubting whether it be better to forbear or go on in the outward exerciſe of religion, (at leaſt in private) when he finds an indiſpoſition of mind unto it.

SUndry converts, when they perceive the unfitneſſe of their ſpirits to offer immediat worſhip to God in prayer, praiſes or thankſgiving, eſpecially in private, do fall in doubt with themſelves, whether it be better to delay the offer of their worſhip, till they find themſelves well diſpoſed for it, or to go on as they may, albeit they apprehend their lips polluted, and their hearts far away from God. Their fear on the one hand is, leſt

leſt they ſhould pollute the worſhip and take Gods name in vain; on the other hand, they fear leſt they fall in the guiltineſſe of omitting a preſcribed duty. The queſtion ſhall be, what the doubting convert ſhould determine and do?

2. For anſwer, this caſe is ſpoken unto before, 2. *Book, Chap.* 17. in as far as the convert determineth not, and doth not what is right, but goeth wrong and pleaſeth himſelf in his bad condition. But here we ſpeak to this caſe, as the convert is in doubt only, and deſireth to be keeped from deceiving himſelf. In which caſe we ſay, that as it is the converts doubt, ſo we muſt confeſſe, that this caſe of indiſpoſition and unfitneſſe for ſpiritual exerciſes is very frequent, and is ordinarily and oftimes a chaſtiſement of us, drawn on by our ſelves, becauſe we do not watch unto prayer, we do not ſtudy to keep our hearts in the fear of the Lord all the day long, we do not foſter that tenderneſſe of conſcience which might furniſh us mater of humiliation, and of thankſgiving to God upon obſervation of our faults againſt God, and of Gods favours daily and hourly remarkably running toward us. Hence it is, when our ordinar time of ſecret worſhip doth come, we find our vaiging minds hardly called home from their wandering, our conſcience challenging us for our looſe and uncircumſpect walking, our affections dull and dead, and all the powers of our ſouls taken as with a palſie, that we cannot beſtir our ſelves in worſhip as we ſhould and would. Therefore, in this caſe, let the convert be humbled and confeſſe his fault, and take with this chaſtiſement and flye unto Chriſt, who beareth and taketh away the iniquity of our pollution of holy things; and let him not defer his worſhip till another occaſion, but wreſtle againſt all impediments and follow out the work in hand, bleſſing God for his pointing out unto him his wants and weakneſſe, his wandering and vanity of mind, his ſlipping and ſliding in his wayes, and for opening unto him a fountain in Chriſt, for waſhing his

his pollutions and healing his wounds. And that the convert may be encouraged to aim at, and follow on, this way, let him consider, that the converts worship may be pleasant and acceptable to God, when the convert is much displeased with himself in the discharge of it: for, there is a worshiping of God in faith, without sense and feeling of the hearts inlargement; and there is a worshiping of God with felt enlargement of heart. The worshiping of God in faith is pleasant unto God, albeit the worshiper in perplexity and wrestling with temptations and corruptions, be much displeased with himself. The worshiping of God with inlargement of heart is pleasant, both unto God and to the worshiper also, as (*Ps.* 119. 32.) *David* gives us to understand, *I will run the way of thy Commandments*, saith he, *when thou shalt enlarge my heart*. But when this inlargement, by sensible assistance of the holy Ghost, is not perceived, the Psalmist is but a dead man in his own estimation; yet, he doth not forbear or delay to worship God as well in bonds as in freedom; *Quicken me*, saith he, *according to thy loving kindnesse*. Therefore, let the convert in this case, 1. follow the example of the Psalmist, who (*Ps.* 5. 3.) resolveth to call on God with his voice, that is, to follow the work of prayer externally, pre-suppose his spiritual powers were bound up, and he unable to back his petitions with suteable affections; *My voice*, saith he, *shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up*. And, *Ps.* 27. 7. *Hear me when I cry with my voice, have mercy also upon me and answer me*. 2. For his incouragement in this case to go on in his worship, let him confesse unto God the truth, as it is presented unto him by his conscience, and say, O Lord my God, these are my sins which I ought to acknowledge before thee with tears, which for the present are dryed up, *&c.* These are thy favours and benefits wherewith I am loadened, which I should acknowledge with joy and sense of thy goodnesse, *&c.*

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but thou Lord delights in truth in the inward parts, Pſ. 51. 8. This will be found our reaſonable ſervice which the Apoſtle calleth for, Rom. 12. 1, 2.

The eight queſtion is, how to ſatisfie the convert, doubting what is the ſin which God purſueth by long-laſting affliction.

IT falleth forth oft-times, when a true convert, being a long time preſſed under ſome laſting croſſe or calamity, doth inquire after the ſpecial cauſes of his affliction; and when he cannot be clear what to determine, doth doubt what to think of his condition: for, he acknowledgeth his ſins, common to him and other converts, to be innummerable; but apprehendeth that it is ſome ſpecial ſin purſued by God, which is the cauſe of his affliction, which becauſe he cannot condeſcend upon, he is at a ſtand, and doubteth what to think or do.

2. For anſwer we ſay, 1. ſuch a caſe is more troubleſom then dangerous; for, ſo long as he is obſerving his ſins, common to him and other converts, and in the exerciſe of repentance is daily humbled before God for his known ſins, he muſt not be anxious, albeit he know not the particular ſin purſued, as he apprehendeth: for, albeit the Lord afflict no man but ſuch as have ſin in them, yet he doth not alwayes, in afflicting of his children, purſue unknown ſin in them. For, ſometime he afflicteth his child to preveen his ſinning, hedging up his way with thornes, leſt he ſhould follow after beloved luſts. Sometime he doth afflict him to try his faith, to teach him patience, meekneſſe, temperance and other virtues, ſuch as are *dying* to the world, *ſeeking* after things ſpiritual, *compaſſion* toward others in affliction. 2. When the afflicted hath compoſed his mind to reverence Gods diſpenſation, whatſoever it is or ſhall be, then let him yet again look upon his affliction, and it may be he ſhall read in the rod what

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is the Lords quarrel. 3. Whether he ſhall find the ſpecial cauſe of his affliction or not, let him turn all his indignation, zeal and hatred againſt the body of death, the bitter root and bulk of actual ſins, and watch diligently over the motions of original ſin, or concupiſcence in himſelf. 4. And let his whole exerciſe ſtir him up to have Chriſt in greater eſtimation, to make uſe of Chriſts righteouſneſſe imputed to believers, and to invocat his holy name for the right uſe-making of his affliction.

The ninth queſtion is, how remiſſion of ſin may be ſaid to be granted in reſpect of ſins to come.

IT is commonly ſaid, that the convert, in his juſtification, hath the remiſſion of ſins by-gone and ſins to come: whereupon the queſtion is moved, how this can ſtand with daily renewed remiſſion of daily ſins; on the one hand, daily renewed remiſſion ſeemeth not neceſſary, firſt, becauſe we believe, that remiſſion of all ſin, is the priviledge of all believers in Chriſt, and the abridgement of the ſpecial articles of faith ſet down in the Apoſtles Creed, as it is called, holdeth this forth. 2. Becauſe it is certain, that Chriſt, in his death, did compleat the payment of the price of redemption from all ſin, as 1 *Joh.* 1. 7. *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſins.* 3. We are ſaid to be not under the law, but under grace, and ſo freed from the curſe of the law. 4. Becauſe if daily remiſſion of ſin be neceſſar to be granted, then it preſuppones, that both original ſin, and every actual ſin flowing forth from it daily, muſt be taken notice of, reckoned for, and repented of daily, which is impoſſible. On the other hand, the convert ſeeth, that every tranſgreſſion of, and diſconformity to, the law is ſin; and the Apoſtle, 1 *Joh.* 1. 8. ſpeaking of himſelf and other converts, ſaith, *If we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us.* And Chriſt hath taught us, as oft as we pray for

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our daily bread, to pray also for the remission of sins. The question is, how the doubt of the convert may be cleared?

2. For answer: We must grant to the convert, that original sin remaineth in the believer, and is not only an exceeding sin, as the Apostle calleth it, *Rom.* 7.13: but also is the fountain of all actual sins which doth pollute the conscience, and sometimes also the outward man. 2. We must grant also, that there cannot be an actual and properly called remission of sins which are not yet committed: for, no man is guilty of that fault wherewith he cannot be charged: for, such a remission were a dispensation and licence to sin, such as the Pope granteth to his slaves to gratifie them, in allowing their vile lusts for inriching himself with the price of that iniquity. 3. If such an actual remission of sins were given in justification, the once justified person could never become a daily debtor by his daily transgressions, contrary to the declaration of Christ in one of the articles of the Lords prayer.

3. For solving the doubt then, we must distinguish the significations and acceptions of *remission of sin*: For, 1. it is taken for remission *purchased* by Christ, by virtue of the covenant of Redemption, in favours of the elect, but not applied unto the elect before the mans conversion, *Heb.* 10. 12, 13, 14. *But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God: from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his foot-stool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* 2. It is taken for remission *promised* by Christ to all that shall believe in him, to be bestowed on them so soon as they shall turn to him, *Act.* 26. 18. Thirdly, it is taken for the *sentence of absolution*, judicially applyed and adjudged to the actual believer, *Eph.* 1.7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.* 4. For the *actual remission* of all sins past before his conversion, *Rom.* 3. 25. *Whom God hath*

hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood to declare his righteousnes for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. 5. For a *constant right* to daily remission of sin, and accesse to the fountain opened up in the house of *David*, (that is, to all the children of the houshold of faith in Christ) *Zech.* 13. 1. *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of* David, *and to the inhabitants of* Jerusalem, *for sin, and for uncleanness.*

4. So then, the convert hath, first, the *actual remission* of all sins preceeding his conversion, and withall his *state*, changed from being a child of Sathan, to be a child of God. Secondly, he hath *right unto* daily remission of sins, as they fall out after conversion; for, Christ, speaking of the remission had in the time of conversion, calleth it *a washing of the whole man*, Joh. 13. 10 *He that is washen needeth not to wash, save his feet, but is wholly clean*, to wit, for the *state* of his person accepted in Christ, and for the application of his right unto daily remission. Christ teacheth all his disciples daily to pray for it, which Christ calleth the *washing of the believers feet*, Joh. 13. 10.

5. For answer to the objections, made against the necessity of daily renewed remission of sin, let it be remembred, that the article of our Creed is so far from making daily remission of sin not necessar, that of necessity it must be extended, not only to the remission of sins past before conversion, but also to the right made unto us, for daily remission of the sins which run daily from the relicts of corrupt nature not fully mortified; for otherwayes, the believer could not have quiet consolation in the daily exercise of renewed repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. 2. As to the second objection, concerning the perfect purchase made by Christ of remission by-past and to come; It doth prove indeed, that there is no other sacrifice for sin, nor price of redemption from sin, save that which was compleated on the crosse; but it doth not prove, that we must only

once

once make application of this purchase; for, Christ keepeth the full purchase in his own hand, and doth let forth the application thereof, as we stand in need, in his own order and by degrees, till he perfect us in sanctification and glorification also.

6. As for the third objection, we must not think, that when we are loosed from the Law as a covenant of Works, we are loosed also from the commands of the Law: for, the covenant of Works prescribed in the Law, is posterior, both in order of nature and time, to the natural writing of the Law in mans heart, *Rom.* 2. 15. And therefore, when the covenant of the law of Works is taken off, the authority of the Law to direct and command all moral duties doth remain, and can no more be dissolved, then the obligation of the reasonable creature to be obedient to the Creator, can be abolished: and therefore, when the believer falleth in a transgression, he meriteth death and destruction as the wages of sin. But Christ our Advocat, who liveth for ever to make intercession for us, holds off the execution of deserved wrath, and giveth to the believer the grace of renewed repentance and faith in him, and so saveth the believer, 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. and, 2. 1.

7. As for the last objection, taken from the impossibility of knowing, taking notice of, or confessing every sin wherewith we are daily polluted, or from the impossibility of putting repentance and faith in exercise about every particular sin; we answer, first, that the children of God, notwithstanding of this impossibility acknowledged by them, have sought and obtained renewed remission of their innumerable sins, *Ps.* 40. 12. and, *Ps.* 19. 12, 13.

8. Secondly, such as are justified by faith, upon confession of such sins as they know and do remember, are accepted of God, as if they had confessed all their sins particularly, because he that hath no mind to deny or excuse any sin in himself, but is willing to open up his heart to God in sincerity, and to confesse every particular,

ticular, if he were able, he hath presented a contrite heart before God, which is a sacrifice acceptable to God, *Psa.* 51. 8, 9. *Psa.* 32. 5. and this much also Christ doth teach us, speaking of the Publican who made a short and general confession of his sins in sincerity, and went home justified, *Luk.* 18. 13, 14.

Thirdly, it is not impossible for a watchfull conscience to observe daily, as many particular sproutings from the root of in-born sin, as may humble him daily, and bear down all confidence in his own righteousnesse, and furnish to him mater for exercise of repentance and faith in Christ. And this lesson the Lord did teach his people under the Law, by the twice offering sacrifice every day morning and evening, that his people observing daily the running issue of corrupt nature, might daily have their recourse by faith unto the lamb of God, that takes away the sins of his own people, and hitherto we are directed to look, *Isa.* 45. 22. and, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1. Mean time, on the one hand, let us beware to lay any sort of merit upon our daily exercise of faith and sorrow for sin in our repentance, otherwayes we should be found offerers unto God of satisfaction from us, and not suiters of remission of sins from God; and on the other hand, let us beware to be discouraged, albeit we do not find daily the renewed intimation and sense of remission: but as we apply the Law to our selves in the exercise of repentance, So let us apply the sentence of absolution pronounced in the Gospel, in favours of every penitent soul that flyeth to Christ for refuge.

The tenth question shall be, concerning spiritual dispositions of mind and qualifications, which may be joyned with, or separat from, the special work of true conversion and saving grace.

THe Apostle, *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 6. 9, 10. tells us of sundry qualifications which may be found in un-

converted men, and also he tells us of *better things which do accompany salvation*, and are sure evidences of regeneration. Of the first sort, there are, among others, these five. 1. A legal conviction of the vileness of sin and vanity of the world. 2. A renouncing of unlawfull pleasures, joyned with a refraining even from lawfull and allowed worldly delights. 3. A natural desire of salvation and of sanctification, that they may be saved. 4. A purpose to live righteously, holily and soberly in this present world. 5. An outward change of maners and conversation, so far as they may be blameless before men. These and such like qualifications may make a fair show in the flesh, and yet may be found to be not only in true converts, but also in such as are strangers from the life of God: such was the Apostle *Paul* before convertion; such was *Israel*, Rom. 9. 31. *Which followed after the law of righteousness, and did not attain to the law of righteousness: Who being ignorant of Gods righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God*, Rom. 10. 3. Of this sort are such of the Papists, who go about to be justified by their own works, and do but mock at the imputation of Christs righteousness, calling it blasphemously, a putatitious or conceited righteousness; not considering, that the Pope and his servants do reckon the imputation of the righteousness and merits of men, and of the superfluity of the Saints righteousness, by reason of their works of supererogation, to be worth a great sum of money, as they find their merchants.

Concerning these five qualifications, some converts, especially such as desire to see the evidences of saving grace in those with whom they will joyn in the society of Church-membership, may make question what to think, whether they be saving graces, or common operations of the Spirit.

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2. For anſwer, we muſt diſtinguiſh between a mans judging of thoſe qualifications in himſelf, and his judging of another, in whom theſe qualifications appear to be; for, a man judging of himſelf, may attain to a clear and certain diſcerning of ſaving grace in himſelf, as the Apoſtle giveth us to underſtand, 1 *Cor.* 2: 11, 12. In which caſe of our judging of our ſelves, this much may be ſaid; that if a man find in himſelf, thoſe qualifications joyned with faith in Chriſt for righteouſneſſe and eternal life, and is ſeeking furniture from Chriſt to bring forth fruits of his faith in new obedience, he may be quiet and be out of doubt of ſaving grace in himſelf: for, unto ſuch a perſon, the deſcription of a true convert may ſafely be applyed, *Phil.* 3. 3. *We are the circumciſion*, &c. And pre-ſuppoſe he hath obſerved theſe qualifications in himſelf, before he obſerved his cloſing with Chriſt, or his application of the offer of reconciliation through him, he neither needeth nor ſhould trouble himſelf or others with queſtioning, whether ſuch and ſuch qualifications in him, before his fixing on Chriſt, were the common or ſpecial operations of the holy Ghoſt: for, ſeing the kingdom of heaven cometh not with obſervation alwayes, it is hard to determine of the firſt beginnings of the working of ſaving grace by the holy Spirit, becauſe ſaving faith hath in it the ſubſtance of hiſtorical, dogmatical and temporary faith. And therefore, when both ſaving faith, and hiſtorical, dogmatical and temporary faith, may produce belief of the law, and convince the man of ſin, and wrath due for ſin, and produce the belief of the Goſpel alſo, without application of the offer of reconciliation, how ſhall a man determine whether theſe effects were produced by vertue of dogmatical and temporary faith, or by vertue of ſaving faith, untill the time that the humbled ſinner flye in unto Chriſt, and ſeek to draw furniture from him for new obedience of the law of love toward God and man,

and ſo put difference betwixt ſaving faith, and that faith which may be in an unregenerat aud unreconciled man? But, when the man is come up to apply Chriſt, and cleave unto him for righteouſneſſe and life, and furniture to carry him on the way unto ſalvation, it is not his wiſdom to diſpute whether theſe five qualifications were common operations of the ſpirit or effects of ſaving faith, not as yet manifeſted to be ſuch, before the perſon did cloſe covenant with God in Chriſt, for not imputing his ſins unto him, and making ſolid reconciliation with him.

3. As for judging of others, when we obſerve theſe qualifications, all or ſome of them, we muſt not determine poſitively what ſort of operation the holy Ghoſt hath in hand; but our part is, according to our place and calling, to help on the leaſt preparatory qualifications, which may ſerve to be inductive and ſerviceable to beget and foſter ſaving faith in them, even when the ſenſe of ſin and unworthineſſe is like to drive them from Chriſt, as it did *Peter*, when he cryed out unto Chriſt, *Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a ſinfull man.* For, God hath not made us Judges of the operations of the holy Ghoſt in this or that perſon, but to be their helpers unto faith when we perceive any good qualification in them, and helpers of their repentance when we perceive any out-breaking evil in them.

The eleventh queſtion ſhall be, of the converts doubting what to think of his condition, when he finds more freedom of prayer in the preſence and audience of others, then when he prayeth in ſecret alone.

IT is not a caſe unuſual, that ſome converts do find a great deal of freedom of prayer in the audience of others, more then alone; for, they have experience, that when they pray in the audience of others in their family, or occaſionally elſewhere, their prayer is more copious

copious then when they are alone, their ſtile of ſpeech more poliſhed, their words in better order, their expreſſions more ſignificant, their notions more ſublime, more fervent, more zealous, then when they are in ſecret in their cloſet; which difference, when they conſider, they doubt what the matter doth mean.

2. For anſwer, firſt, there is a difference to be put between ſolitary prayer in ſecret, and prayer in ſociety with others; for, in ſecret oft-times the converts worſhip is carried on in the ſenſe of his ſinfulneſſe, unworthineſs and indiſpoſition preſented to God through Chriſt, with ſighs and confuſed groans without words; for he ſtudieth moſt for affection, and not for words, having no ear to care for but the ear of the ſearcher of hearts, who knoweth his weakneſſe, fears, tentations and wreſtling with doubts. But in company, he ſtudieth moſt to make uſe of knowledge, and to expreſſe himſelf ſo, as he may carry along the company with whom he prayeth with conſent, that he may edifie himſelf and them in worſhip; and in this caſe, he may find greater fredom poſſibly then he findeth alone in ſecret.

Secondly, it is oft-times found, that God (for his own glory, and the mutual edification of two or three gathered together in his name) doth inlarge the freedom of ſpeech in the ſpeaker.

Upon which conſiderations, the doubting convert may ſatisfie himſelf; only let him beware leaſt vain glory, or ſtudying to have the applauſe of ſuch as hear him pray, do not blow wind in his ſails; and in as far as after examination he findeth himſelf guilty, let him, when he is in ſecret alone, be humbled before God for it, and crave pardon through Chriſt, ſeeking help and healing of this wicked inclination.

The twelfth queſtion ſhall be of the doubt which the convert may have in a caſe contrary to the former.

SOme converts do find themſelves more inlarged in ſecret prayer and alone, then in the company of one or moe. In company, ſaith he, I cannot utter my own priyat condition without a needleſſe and inconvenient diſcovery of my preſent caſe to others, and I can hardly conjecture what may be their neceſſity with whom I pray, or condeſcend upon petitions and thankſgiving fit for us in common. I am taken up alſo with thoughts of what eſtimation my hearers may have of me. *&c.* But in ſecret prayer I am freed of that care, I am not feared that God ſhall miſ-conſtrue my words, or thoughts. I may in ſecret make a long pauſe in my petitions, and fall in meditation upon ſome paſſage of Scripture, and after a while direct my ſpeech unto the Lord: I may expreſſe my affections by voice and geſture, as they fall out, and pour forth my heart to God with tears, without fear of being eſteemed an hypocrit, *&c.* Mean time I doubt what my indiſpoſition to pray in company doth import, when duty calleth for it.

2. For anſwer, we grant, that God, to ſome of his dear Saints, whoſe prayers in ſecret he will accept and reward openly, hath not given ability to edifie others by way of praying in their audience; to others in regard of age or ſexe, to whom modeſty and ſilence is moſt ſuitable, he hath not given confidence to pray in name of others, whether moe or fewer, as their mouth. But as for theſe, to whom God hath given ability and a calling, by reaſon of a charge in the family, or ſome occaſional exigence, to pray in the audience of others, and yet notwithſtanding they do foſter their natural averſeneſſe from ſuch a duty, they had need to examine themſelves, whether they be hindered by fear to loſs ſome of their eſtimation at the hands of the hearers, if

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possibly all things should not be found so well digested and expressed in the prayer, as they would.

The thirteenth question, shall be of the converts doubting what to think, when he compareth his disposition to prayer, and Gods dispensation toward him in prayer.

SUndry converts, when they compare their own divers dispositions to prayer, with the divers dispensations of God toward them in prayer, they are at a stand what to think. Sometime (saith one) albeit I be very hardly drawn to pray at all, yet when after wrestling, the conscience of the duty doth set me on work, my prayer goeth on as I could wish, light is furnished to me what to confesse, what to thank for, what to seek both for my self and others; whereby I gather, for the time, that the Lord is pleased with my person in Christ, and hath accepted my prayer. Sometime it fareth otherwayes with me: for, when time, place, and leisure for prayer concur, and I am now about to make use of opportunity, and do fall down before the Lord to speak, on a suddain, I have nothing to say; matter, words and light do fail me, darkness and confusion falleth on my mind, and my prayer suudry times is stopped, and closeth with a sigh or groan; which dispositions of my heart and dispensations of the Lord when I compare, I am in doubt what to think.

2. For answer, in the first case, concerning the Lords blessing of the aiming at duty, the matter is clear and speaks for it self; for, God will have us to aim at a right frame of spirit when we are about the discharge of any part of his worship, but not forbear to do the duty, if we cannot reach that fitnesse of spirit which we desire; let us strive against all impediments, and God will help us to fight, will give the victory and reward it for our encouragment to set upon our duty.

As for the other case of setting on the duty, and missing of furniture to discharge it, let us consider, that God in this dispensation is teaching us, that both the discharge of any duty, and the successe thereof, do not depend upon him that willeth, or on him that runneth, but upon God that sheweth mercy; yea, he teacheth us by experience, that to will and to do are two distinct gifts, the one whereof sometime he will give and not the other, and sometime he will give both, that we may learn not to limit the Lord in any case, but really acknowledge that every good gift is from him, that we may aim at our duty and depend on him for the blessing.

The fourteenth question is, how to solve the doubt of the convert in another like comparison of his dispostion and Gods dispensation.

SOme converts, out of their own experience, may say, I being in a sad condition of heart, have sundry times diligently used all means to be comforted, and have wondered within my self, that my pains have produced no hoped-for effect, but the heart hath lyen dead, like the child of the Shunamit, when *Gehasi* laid the staff of *Elisha* upon him. At another time I have been surprized unexpectedly with inlargement of heart, with liberty of speech in prayer, with peace and joy in the holy Ghost, to the no small confirmation of my faith, and what to think of this divers dispensation, I cannot tell.

2. For answer, the doubt may be satisfied, by observation of the Lords grace and wisdom toward his child; in the first case, he giveth grace to use the means, and suspendeth the sensible fruits thereof, to teach us, 1. that he hath indeed tyed us to the use of all appointed means, but left himself free to give the fruits thereof, in what time, and in what measure he pleaseth. 2. He teacheth us, that whatsoever bene-

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fit he doth beſtow upon us in the uſe of the means, he doth beſtow them, not *for* the uſing of the means, but *by* the uſing of the means. 3. He teacheth us, that there is no inherent vertue, nor effectual power in the means, but that the means are the way wherein we muſt walk, that we may find the bleſſing from God in uſeing the means, and not put confidence in them. 4. He teacheth us, whatſoever mean or inſtrument is made uſe of, we ſhould, with *Paul* planting and *Apollo* watering, give the glory of the increaſe, fruit and ſucceſſe unto God alone.

3. As to the other caſe, wherein the Lord doth prevent his childs uſing of means, and giveth an anſwer ere he call, thereby he teacheth us the ſame leſſon, to wit, that what bleſſing God doth give, he doth it freely of grace and not for works. 2. He teacheth us, that what bleſſing we expect in the uſe of the means, he will give it, not when we would, nor in what meaſure we would, but as he ſees it fitteſt for our good and his own glory, that ſo we ſhould neither be fruſtrat of the fruit of the means uſing, nor yet conceive the fruit thereof as a deſerved reward of works, but as a gift of meer grace.

The fifteenth queſtion, ſhall be about the meaſure of mortification or ſanctification, whether it be growing or decaying.

OFt-times true converts fall in this doubt, not indeed when they are in a ſenſible and comfortable condition, for then they ſeem to themſelves to be growing in holineſſe; neither fall they in this doubt when their condition is ſenſibly evil, as when the power of in-born ſin either breaketh forth in action externally, or defileth their ſpirit at leaſt; for then they ſeem to themſelves to be decaying. But this doubt ariſeth when they are going on in their ordinary way of a blameleſſe converſation, without any

any observable change of their spiritual condition to the better or to the worse. Then is it, that they seem to themselves in a dubious condition, and cannot say, whether mortification of corrupt nature, or sanctification be on the growing hand, or not.

2. For answer to this doubt about the measure of holinesse, 1. it is not safe curiously to inquire, what measure of holinesse a man hath attained: for, *as it is not good to eat much honey: So for men to search out their own glory, it is not glory*, Prov. 25. 27.

Secondly, it is hard to determine the question; for, God useth to hide from his children, especially the younger sort, these operations of the holy Spirit, which may in any sort weaken their endeavour in piety, or foster pride in them, but he discovers unto them their sinfulnesse and the imperfections of their obedience, that he may set forward their repentance and laying hold on Christs righteousnesse.

Thirdly, there is such an instability of any good condition wherein any convert may be, so great variety of tentations, such a vicissitude of victory of the flesh and of the spirit in their daily conflict, that hardly can any man satisfie himself in the solution of this question: for, he who thought himself dead to the lusts of the flesh, and to riches and honour, may shortly find himself overtaken in the net, and fall foully in the mire, and be found carnal.

Therefore, let him that stands take heed least he fall, let him watch and pray least he be overcome in tentation, let him study to observe the wickednesse of nature, and imperfections of his best works, that the righteousnesse of Christ may be in greater estimation in our eyes, and we may grow in faith and love toward God, drawing vertue from Christ, and furniture to every good work. This is the way to grow in holinesse indeed, and not to be proud for any thing in us, or done by us; and this is the way wherein the Apostle did constantly walk, *Phil.* 3. 14, 15. 16.

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The sixteenth question is, what the convert shall think or do in hard afflictions.

WHen the convert doth fall in long-some bodily diseases and sad afflictions, by unexpected and long-lasting adversity, when Sathan is permitted to vex him with sore tentations, when God doth hide his face for a long time from him, when he exposeth him unto the cruel persecution of worldly men, he cannot choose but fall in many doubts and perplexities: for, when God doth immediatly afflict him, he readily suspecteth that God is angry at him; if he louse reines unto Sathan to sift him and vex him, if he answer not his supplications, comfort him not readily, what wonder multitude of thoughts arise in his heart? The question is, in this case, what shall the convert think or do?

2. For answer. It is true, the Lord useth oft-times, in his deep wisdom and unchangeable love to his children, to exercise them, as is said, and Sathan will not fail to whisper in their ear, that God doth not love them; in which case, if the convert do not stand fast, in the faith of the love of God through Christ, in all his tentations, he cannot stand out in the conflict.

Therefore, that he may guard and strengthen his faith, first, let him seek wisdom from God, to expound the Lords dispensations toward himself, by the word and working of God in his children, set down in the holy Scripture; in exercising of whom by affliction, he hath discovered the corruption of their nature, the bitter fruits of sin, and promoved the work of the mortification of sinfull lusts that are in the world, to wit, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and pride of life, and taught them humility, meekness, patience, temperance and compassi-

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on toward others in affliction. Secondly, let him ſet his affections on things ſpiritual, and on our bleſſed Redeemer Jeſus Chriſt, who is at the right hand of the Father making interceſſion for all them that call upon him, that they may be ſaved, alwayes remembering, that as the Law is a pedagogue to lead us and draw us unto Chriſt, So affliction is a pedagogue to lead us to the Law, and to Chriſt the end of the Law for righteouſneſſe and life. Thirdly, let him learn, in examination of his own condition, accurately to diſtinguiſh the Lords part exerciſing him with trouble, for tryal, and training him on in the obedience of faith, as for his own glory, ſo for the good of his afflicted child; and Sathans part, in cruelty, craftineſſe and malice, tempting and vexing him; and his own part, who hath deſerved much more affliction then is come upon him: which conſiderations may keep him from fretting and murmuring in his trouble, how heavy ſoever it be. Fourthly, let him put difference between ſinning and ſuffering of trouble, that he may chooſe to endure affliction, rather then by ſinning draw on much more trouble.

3. But if the afflicted convert ſeem to himſelf deſerted of God, in reſpect of the ſpeciall operations of the holy Ghoſt, let him be of good courage, he is not altogether deſerted who can obſerve the decaying of ſaving graces from the meaſure he hath found before; he is not altogether deſerted, who loveth communion with God, and longeth after it, and can go to God and regrat his deſertion as a ſad affliction; for, if our loving Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath withdrawn himſelf out of the ſight of his afflicted child, yet hath he perfumed his own foot-ſteps with the unction of his own Spirit, that he may quicken and kindle his childs love and deſire toward him. This regrated deſertion is but in part, not altogether, yea, it is not a reall but a ſeeming deſertion. The Lord reſt-

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eth in his love, albeit he hide the effects of his love for a time: He preſerveth the habits of ſaving grace as his own ſeed in the afflicted heart, albeit he do not alwayes draw them forth unto action: if he withdraw the ſight of ſaving graces, yet he augments the eſtimation of them, and langour to find the Lord working in him. If the afflicted obſerve well, he ſhall ſee the hand of the Lord in ſome part of his works, ſo that in his hardeſt condition he may ſay, with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſ.* 73. *Nevertheleſſe, I am continually with thee, thou holdeſt me with thy right hand.*

4. If it ſhall pleaſe God, with immediat afflictions from himſelf, to ſuffer, not only Sathan to fight againſt the faith and conſolation of his child, but alſo to ſuper-add a fiery tryal of his faith, by cruell perſecution for righteouſneſſe, let him ſtill, for all this, be of good courage, becauſe in all ſuch battels the Lord of hoſtes ſhall be with him, who will not ſuffer his ſouldiers to be tempted above their ſtrength, but, with the tentation, will give an iſſue, that they may eſcape, and will furniſh ſtrength to them, that they ſhall overcome: for, he hath laid up a crown of righteouſneſſe for all them that keep the faith, and at laſt will give it to all that love the coming of our Lord Jeſus. Wherefore, let the afflicted convert humble himſelf under one or all theſe exerciſes, and not doubt of his condition, ſeing it is agreeable to the Scripture and lot of the Saints.

5. It is true, that all affliction to the fleſh, for the preſent, is a bitter potion, but yet reached forth to the patient by the hand of our Phyſician and heavenly Father. It is a fire, but will not conſume the burning buſh; it is a furnace, but will not deſtroy any mettal but droſſe only; it is a labour, but ſhall in due time bring forth the quiet fruits of righteouſneſſe; it is a rough fyle, but the more ſharp it be, it ſhall ſo much ſooner rub away the ruſt of the veſſel

veſſel of grace, make the ſoul of the penitent more bright, and, by the bleſſing of God, render him more humble in his thoughts, more fervent in prayer, mor conſtant in the faith, more ſtrong to bear whatſoever burthen ſhall be laid on him, more deſirous to grow in all vertue, more carefull to keep communion with God, more innocent in his converſation, more clean in his conſcience, and at laſt more bleſſed. Let not then the afflicted convert regard the labour he is put to, but look to the fruit, reckon the worth of healing, and not the bitterneſſe of his potion; let him not look to the pain of the affliction, but to the fatherly love of God chaſtiſeing him, who expreſſely hath told us, that he chaſteneth all whom he loveth, leſt they periſh with the world; let him not ſhift the battel, but ſet his eye on the crown, and go on in the way of God, how many ſoever his tribulations ſhall be: for, as the outward man by trouble doth decay, So the inward man is renewed daily: for, the Apoſtle, who who was moſt acquaint with ſuch exerciſe, hath, for incouragment of all who are under the croſſe, ſaid, *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen; for the things which are ſeen, are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen, are eternal,* 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18.

The ſeventeenth and laſt queſtion, ſhall be about the reliks of ſin in the Saints in this life.

THe remainder of ſin doth often-times drive true converts to many doubts; for, when carnal luſts and ſinfull paſſions ſeem to be ſubdued, and in a good meaſure mortified, incontinent, upon the leaſt occaſion (as dying aſhes when ſulphureous pouder is caſt upon them) they kindle and are inflamed:

ſlamed: and when their ſpirit is moſt willing and ready to do good, corrupt nature ſtandeth up and maketh oppoſition, ſo that the co-vert cannot do the good he would; yea, ſuch is the power thereof, that oft-times it forceth him to the ill he would not. In which warfare, being oft overcome, he is ſo weary, that he falleth out, with the Apoſtle in his lamentation, Rom. 7. 24 crying, *O miſerable man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* and while he ſearcheth how it cometh to paſſe, that ſuch a body of death lodgeth in the children of God, and ſo powerfull relicts of ſin remain in the juſtified man, he cannot ſatisfie himſelf, conſidering, that God doth hate ſin, and maketh the new creature hate it alſo; which God could eaſily take away in a moment, in the day of the converts reconciliation and juſtification.

2. For anſwer to this queſtion; if a reaſon of Gods permiſſion of the relicts of ſin, to remain in the Saints all the dayes of their life, be asked after; a reaſon ſuperiour to the moſt holy will of God to permit it, can none be given, nor ſhould it be ſought after. But to quiet our minds in this caſe, theſe following conſiderations may ſuffice, 1. it is the will of the Lord our God, our wiſe and loving Phyſician, to renew and reſtore his image in his children piece and piece, till it be brought to perfection in all the lineaments, parts and degrees thereof, and to heal our ſinfull ſickneſſes and infirmities, not in an inſtant, but by little and little, as he ſeeth fit; this way of bringing his work to perfection by degrees, he keeped in the creation of the world, which he did not perfect in a moment, but in ſix dayes: So alſo, the ſeed that is caſten in the ground every year, he doth not bring forth to maturity, for mens uſe, in leſſe time then ſome moneths. He doth not form infants in the womb, and bring them up to their appointed ſtature and ſtrength, in

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leſſe time then a number of years. And for the relicts of ſin, how odious and loathſome ſoever they are in themſelves, yet he can, in his deep wiſdom, make uſe thereof in a moſt holy way for the good of penitent converts: for, as it was fitting, that a difference ſhould be put between the militant Church on earth, and the triumphant in heaven, So it is the Lords wiſe will to exerciſe his militant children, in conflicting against ſin and miſery in this life, that the next life and triumph over ſin, death and hell, may be the ſweeter when it cometh, and more deſired till it come.

2. Secondly, as the Lord, after ſub-duing of the Canaanites, did not forthwith caſt them altogether out of the holy land, but ſuffered a multitude of them to live, for the exerciſe of the Iſraelites with warfare, and for teaching his people by their own experience, that the victory which they had obtained over the Canaanites was not purchaſed by their ſword or bow, but was given unto them from the Lord of hoſtes, who led forth their armies and proſpered them: So doth he not aboliſh the relicts of ſin in his Saints in this life, after their converſion, that they may know that the victory which they have received, over the devil, the world and the fleſh, in their converſion, is not to be aſcribed to the power of their own free-will, but unto God only. For, if the renewed convert cannot over-come the relicts of the broken forces of his ſpiritual adverſaries within him, which his renewed will would moſt earneſtly expell, how can he give the glory of his victory over the devil and the world in his converſion, unto the power of his corrupt and unrenewed free-will?

3. Thirdly, it is required of all that come unto Chriſt, that they deny themſelves, take up their croſſe daily and follow him; and to make them ſo do, ſtrong motives are daily furniſhed from the feeling of the relicts of ſin in our ſelves: for, how can a renewed

newed convert look upon his own ignorance, errors, folly and vanity of his mind, perverseneſſe of his will, impotency to good and propenſion unto all ſin, and not loath himſelf, and ſo be forced to flye to Chriſt the Redeemer for relief?

4. The remainder of ſin being an adverſary to all vertues, doth furniſh work to all the habits infuſed by God for the daily exerciſe thereof, according as inborn ſin doth put forth it ſelf to the hinderance of faith, love, hope, patience, temperance, &c. but in ſpecial it ſerves to bear down pride and to foſter humility: for, this doth the experience of the Apoſtle ſhew, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. *Leaſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure through the abundance of the revelation, there was given to me a thorn in the fleſh.*

5. Nothing doth more manifeſt the infirmity of the ſtrongeſt ſouldiers of Chriſt, then the power of inborn ſin, brought forth in the conflict againſt the new creature; No ſharper ſpur to prayer and imploring of Gods help, then the felt power of the remainder of ſin: this alſo doth the experience of the Apoſtle teach us, 2 *Cor.* 12. 8. *For this thing I beſought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.*

6. How much the endurance of this conflict, with the remainder of ſin, doth ſerve to manifeſt the greatneſſe of the Lords power, and largeneſſe of his grace towards his weak ſouldiers, whom he upholdeth and comforteth in this conflict, the anſwer which the Lord giveth to the Apoſtles prayer, maketh manifeſt, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *And he ſaid unto me, my grace is ſuffiſient for thee; for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſſe.*

7. We are ſlow to believe, dull to apprehend and learn that which the Word of God tells us of the uglineſſe of the body of ſin, the perverſe wickedneſſe of corrupt nature, the filthineſſe of the fleſh, the wiles and deceitfulneſſe of the old man, and the enmity of our corrupt nature againſt God. Therefore, in, and by the frequent and renewed conflicts, now with one

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luſt, then with another, we are forced by experience to learn the leſſon more and more ſolidly, and believe the truth of the Lords Word ſpeaking of ſin that is in us, and to ingage our ſelves to proſecute the mortification of ſin unto the death.

8. The renewed experience of the power of ſin in our fleſh, ſhould make us ſo much the more vigilant againſt it, and daily to put on the whole armour of God: Becauſe we muſt fight, not only with the fleſh, but alſo with principalities, powers and ſpiritual wickedneſſe, which take advantage of the ſin that naturally dwelleth in us, *Epheſ. 6. 11, 12. Put on the whole armour of God, for we wreſtle not with fleſh and blood*, to wit, only.

9. The conſcience of the remainder of ſin dwelling in us, ſerveth to move us to pity, and to have compaſſion on the children of *Adam*, and meekly to reſtore our weak brethren, who are overtaken in any offence, as the Apoſtle doth teach us, *Tit. 3. 2. Shewing all meekneſſe to all men. For we our ſelves alſo were ſometime fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived*, &c. Gal. 6. 1. *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſſe, conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted.*

10. Laſt of all, the permiſſion of the reliques of ſin, to remain in true converts all the dayes of their life, doth ſerve to decide the great controverſie between God and men, concerning the way of juſtification: For, by nature we cannot admit the righteouſneſſe of God, which is by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, flying to his ſatisfaction of juſtice for us, and righteouſneſſe imputed to us thereby: for, by nature, with miſ-believing *Iſrael*, we acknowledge no iuſtification, ſave *of*, or *for* works, albeit it be impoſſible, *Rom.* 10. 3. And as *they being ignorant of Gods righteouſneſſe, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſſe, have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the righteouſneſſe of God*, So we, even after converſion, and after embracing

bracing of justification by faith, in our conversion, do give oft-times evidence of our natural inclination to seek after the righteousnesse of works, for after examination of our selves, we shall find, that our confidence doth flow and ebb as we are pleased or displeased with our own carriage; and when we have most need to make use of the righteousnesse by faith in Christ, we forget it or slight it, do not flye to it, do not adhere to it, do not comfort and strengthen our selves in conflicts by it (as hath oft-times been observed by us) what then would we do, if our going about to establish our own righteousnesse did prosper? or if the power of in-born sin did not set up it self against us, and force us, by the law, either to dispair or flye to Christ? And this our natural inclination, even after conversion, to return and seek after the righteousnesse of the law, may be seen in the Galatians, who having begun in the spiritual way of justification by faith, sought to be perfected by the fleshly way of justification by works, and did fall in danger of falling from grace, and excluding themselves from the blessing of the promise through Christ.

Wherefore our infinitly wise Physician Jesus Christ taketh course, as we have said, for his own glory and our good, not to repair at once the image of God in us, nor to heal our sinfull diseases all at once, but piece and piece, by degrees, that his righteousnesse, bestowed on those that flye unto him for refuge, may be in higher and higher estimation daily, that the fountain opened up in him, for removing of sin and uncleanesse, may daily be made use of, and the benefit of justification may daily be looked upon as a new gift, that vertue may daily be sucked out of him for bearing of good fruits, and out of his fulnesse we may receive daily grace for grace, and may render thanks unto our God daily, and blesse him for his grace given unto us, as did the Prophet, *Ps.* 103. 1, 3. *Blesse the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth*

giveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy infirmities; And grow in the love of God, for the remiſſion of ſo many ſins as eſcape us daily, as did the woman, *Luk.* 7. 47. *who loved much becauſe many ſins were forgiven her*; And grow in holineſſe, without putting confidence in our works, as the Pſalmiſt did. *Pſ.* 71. 15, 16. *My mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy righteouſneſſe---I will go in the ſtrength of the Lord God, and will make mention of thy righteouſneſſe, even of thine only.* And the Apoſtle giveth us his example, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9, 12, 13, 14.

Wherefore, let the doubting convert make uſe of theſe conſiderations, and long for the coming of Chriſt, who ſhall aboliſh ſin and miſery altogether. To whom, with the Father and holy Spirit, be glory for ever. *Amen.*

A Table of the Titles of the several Chapters.

Book I.

Chap. Page.

1. Of Conscience in general. 1
2. Of cases of Conscience in general. 7
3. Of Regeneration what it is; and the regenerat man, who he is. 10
4. Of divine Covenants about the eternal salvation of men; and in special, of the covenant of Redemption; shewing, that there is such a Covenant, and what are the articles thereof. 22
5. Of the covenant of Works. 71
6. Of the covenant of Grace. 86
7. For a further clearing and confirmation of the doctrine about the three Covenants, from Jer. 31. and, Heb. 8. 133
8. Of the prudent application of divine Covenants in general. 148
9. Of the more special application of divine Covenants, for removing the impediments of regeneration. 162
10. Concerning them that are like to despair. 182

11. *Concerning them that abſolve themſelves without warrand.* 190

Book. II.

1. *OF conſiderations to be premiſed.* 215
2. *Wherein the regenerat mans doubt of his being in the ſtate of grace, by reaſon of his felt unworthineſs, is anſwered.* 241
3. *Wherein the regenerat mans doubts, ariſing from the multitude and weight of his ſins againſt the Law and the Goſpel, and againſt the light of his conſcience, are anſwered.* 245
4. *Wherein is ſolved the doubt of the regenerat man, raiſed by his ſuſpicion, whether he be elected or not.* 250
5. *Wherein the regenerat mans doubting of his regeneration, becauſe he findeth no power in himſelf to believe in Chriſt, is anſwered.* 253
6. *Wherein the doubt of the regenerat man, concerning his being in the ſtate of grace, ariſing from his apprehended defect of humiliation and ſorrow for ſin, is anſwered.* 257
7. *Wherein the Coriſtians doubt, whether he be regenerat, becauſe he findeth not his righteouſneſs exceeding the righteouſneſſe of the Scribes and Phariſees, is anſwered.* 263
8. *Wherein the regenerat mans doubt, whether he be in the ſtate of grace, ariſing from his unquietneſſe of ſpirit, is anſwered.* 274

9. *Wherein*

9. *Wherein the converts doubt, ariſing from his uncertainty at what time he was converted, is ſolved.* 292

10. *Wherein is ſolved, the converts doubt of his regeneration, ariſing from his apprehenſion, that the beginning of the change of his life was not from the ſincere love of God, but either from terrour or ſelf-love, which he conceiveth to be but carnal.* 294

11. *Wherein the converts doubt of his being in the ſtate of grace, ariſing from heavy afflictions and grievous tentations, is ſolved.* 298

12. *Wherein is ſolved, the converts doubt of his converſion, ariſing from the power of his corruption, manifeſting it ſelf more after his entry upon the courſe of new obedience, then it did before he began to repent.* 304

13. *Wherein is ſolved the converts doubt, whether he be in the ſtate of grace, ariſing from his comparing of himſelf with the hypocrit and unregenerat in thoſe perfections they may attain unto.* 311

14. *Wherein is ſolved the doubt of the true convert, whether he be in the ſtate of grace, becauſe ſome godly perſons look upon him as an hypocrit.* 313

15. *Wherein the converts doubting of his being in the ſtate of grace, ſo oft as he doth not feel the ſenſe of his reconcsliation with God, is examined and anſwered.* 316

16. *Wherein is ſolved the true converts doubt of his regeneration, becauſe he ſeemeth to himſelf not to grow in grace by the uſe of the means appointed for his growth.* 320

17. *Wherein is ſolved the converts doubt, whether he be regenerat, becauſe he ſeemeth to himſelf to follow religion and righteouſneſſe from the common operation of Gods working by moral ſwaſion, and not from the ſpecial operation and impulſion of the holy Spirit.* 322

18. *Wherein is ſolved the true converts doubt, whether he be regenerat, becauſe he findeth not ſelf-denyal in the meaſure which is requiſit in converts.* 326

19. *Wherein is ſolved the doubt of the true convert, whether he be indeed converted, ariſing from this, that he knoweth no child of God ſo hardly exerciſed as he is.* 329

20. *Wherein is ſolved the converts doubt, whether he be converted, becauſe he doth not find in himſelf the infallible marks of regeneration.* 331

21. *Wherein is ſolved the doubt of the true convert, whether he be indeed converted, becauſe he cannot confidently apply to himſelf the promiſes of the Goſpel.* 335

22. *Wherein is ſolved the doubt of the true convert concerning his converſion, ariſing from the obſervation in himſelf of preſumption and ſecurity in his proſperity, and of his misbelief in adverſity.* 341

23. *Wherein is ſolved the doubt of a true converts regeneration, ariſing from ſome falſe rule applyed without reaſon to himſelf.* 344

24. *Wherein is ſolved the converts doubt of his own converſion, becauſe he hath found the deceitfulneſſe of his own heart, and dare not truſt it any more.* 347

25. *Wherein is ſolved the doubt of the true converts converſion, ariſing from his breach of the covenant of Grace, as he conceiveth.* 351

26. *Wherein is ſolved the true converts doubt, whether he be regenerat, becauſe he findeth himſelf not only far from the meaſure of holineſſe which he obſerveth to have been in the Saints commended in Scripture; but alſo ſhort of the meaſure which ſome of his acquaintance have attained unto.* 355

27. *Wherein is ſolved the true converts doubt, whether he be in the bleſſed ſtate of grace, becauſe he findeth himſelf frequently in an evil condition.* 358

28. *Wherein is ſolved the doubt of the true convert concerning his regeneration, becauſe he findeth the power of the body of death in the pollution of the imaginations of his heart, vigorous and powerfull.* 362

29. *Shewing how to quench the fiery darts of Sathan, and reſiſt his ſinfull ſuggeſtions, whether of ſhorter endurance or of longer continuance.* 364

30. *Wherein are ſome mixed caſes ſpoken of, whereunto the true convert is ſubject, and ſo may fall to doubt of his converſion or intereſt in Chriſt.* 369

BOOK

Book. III.

1. *Concerning ſome premiſes.* 376
2. *Wherein is handled, the caſe of ſuch as are fallen from their firſt love, and are well pleaſed in this caſe.* 383
3 *Concerning the converts ſinfull conniving at, and tolerating of, the errors and tranſgreſſions of others.* 387
4. *Concerning the caſe of the true convert, falling aſleep in carnal ſecurity under guiltineſſe of fleſhly pollutions, and dreaming himſelf to be in no ill condition.* 390
5. *Concerning the converts pleaſing himſelf in his luke-warm condition.* 393
6. *Concerning ſuch converts as lean unto the props of carnal confidence and pleaſe themſelves in this condition.* 395
7. *Concerning the caſe of the convert in ſome point of doctrine deluded, and pleaſing himſelf in this condition.* 410
8. *Concerning the converts conſcience, miſtaking vice for vertue, and pleaſing himſelf in this condition.* 425
9. *Of the caſe of conſcience, dealing treacherouſly under pretenſe of liberty of conſcience.* 431
10. *Of ſuch as do pleaſe themſelves in a condition not pleaſing God, becauſe they conceive they can pray well under any condition.* 439
11. *Of the converts eſteeming the peace of God to be but a carnal ſecurity.* 442
12. *Of*

12. *Of the case of a convert, taking some acts of justifying faith to be high presumption in his person.* 445

13. *Of the condition of the convert, fearing that the joy of the holy Ghost which he hath felt, be found only to be either the joy of speculation, common to temporal believers, or a meer delusion.* 449

14. *Of the converts suspecting, that his zeal for God and against the sins of others hath been fleshly severity and imprudent temerity.* 454

15, *Of the converts suspecting his aiming at circumspect walking, shall be found in him scrupulosity.* 456

16. *Concerning the converts suspicion, that his softness of heart is nothing but a natural disposition to weep upon any occasion.* 459

17. *Concerning the converts suspicion, that all his devotion is but lip-labour which is not joyned with a tender and melting heart, and with Gods sensible approbation.* 461

18. *Concerning the converts looking upon the fight of his faith, as if it were the failing of his faith.* 466

19. *Concerning the converts straitning his charity toward others, more then he did at the first time of his conversion, conceiving his former larger charity, was unwarrantable folly.* 469

20. *Concerning the converts mistaking his condition, because of felt in-lake in his charity, and love to God and men.* 474

21. *Concerning the converts despising of his own exercises of religion, because of his felt vanity of mind therein.* 476

22. *Concerning*

22. *Concerning the converts discouragement for felt want of ability to do the duties commanded, whereunto his renewed will is very bent.* 479

23. *Concerning the converts imprudent censure of himself for felt ingratitude.* 480

24. *Concerning the converts imprudent censure of himself, for his felt impatiency in bearing lesser troubles, after his patient bearing of greater troubles.* 484

25. *Concerning the converts mistaking his case, for want of such a submission unto Gods exercising of him, as he would have.* 485

26. *Concerning the converts mistaking of his condition, because of temptations.* 487

27. *Concerning the converts mistaking his condition, when he doth observe some degrees of Gods deserting him.* 491

28. *Concerning cases, wherein the convert is in doubt what to determine about his condition.* 493

To

To the Reader.

BE pleaſed to take notice, that, *Book* 3. *Chap.* 2. *Page* 383. theſe words, *The firſt rank ſhall be of ſome Caſes, wherein the Conſcience,* &c. ſhould be joyned with the words following, and of the ſame Character with them, as being the beginning of the ſaid Chapter, and no part of the title thereof.

Likewiſe, in numbering the Pages, thou wilt find after 256. in the next Page, 235 for 257. Any other miſtakes that occur, as in the miſ-placing, changing, defect or ſuperfluity of Letters, Figures or Notes of diſtinction, be pleaſed to pardon, ſeing there will be few or none of any moment.

FINIS.